

## Polish strike suspended in compromise deal

Leaders of Solidarity, Poland's independent trade union, last night suspended Tuesday's general strike but threatened possible strike action to back the call for independent farmers' unions, Government concessions on hours and union access to the media prompted the Soviet press to sharpen attacks on Solidarity, accusing it of undermining the state.

## Union warning over farmers' demands

Warsaw, Feb 1.—Solidarity, the Polish free trade union movement, tonight suspended a one-hour national warning strike set for Tuesday but threatened to consider future strike action to support the cause of Rural Solidarity, the independent farmers' union.

The union's national consultative commission announced its decision after a day-long meeting to review last Saturday's agreement with the authorities over working norms and the union's access to the mass media.

The decision-making body formally ratified the government-union agreements.

The union said Saturday's compromise agreements did not fully live up to public expectation but it acknowledged them as "an initial step".

Tuesday's warning strike had originally been called to back a campaign by Poland's three and a half million private farmers for the right to set up their own independent unions.

The issue of Rural Solidarity was left unresolved after the Government-union talks, but the Government commission today began separate talks with the farmers in what appeared to be a breakthrough.

The official news agency PAP reported that the Supreme Court would give its ruling on the legalization of the Rural Solidarity within 10 days.

"We do not feel that a strike (on Tuesday) would be purposeful, considering that the talks between the Government and the farmers have not under way", Mr Karol Modzelewski, Solidarity's chief spokesman, told a news conference.

But Mr Modzelewski said a general strike could be called if the farmers' dispute is not resolved.

Mr Lech Walesa, Solidarity's leader, talking on national television, in keeping with Government pledges to give his union access to the mass media,

confirmed the threat of a general strike.

"We continue to have this weapon, and will not hesitate to use it if there is an attack on us or the farmers", Mr Walesa stated.

The 50-member consultative commission had come under some pressure today to withhold ratification of the new accord, but when a resolution was adopted there were only six votes against.

Mr Janusz Onyszkiewicz, another Solidarity spokesman, said the wave of strikes and work boycotts mounted by Solidarity in the past two weeks had persuaded the Government to soften its stand on the question of free Saturdays and the mass media.

"But it was not a total victory. It was a compromise. We met the Government halfway", he said.

Solidarity, which has demanded the immediate introduction of a five-day working week, agreed to accept one working Saturday a month. The Government had ordered two working Saturdays a month.

The resolution said Solidarity would continue to struggle for the 40-hour week, but would appeal to all Poles to put in one eight-hour working Saturday because of the country's dire economic situation.

The resolution added that Solidarity demanded full information on the state of the national economy and on the proposed economic reform, as well as public control of fiscal policy.

The question of a six-day-old general strike in the southern province of Bielsko Biala was raised during the press conference, and Mr Onyszkiewicz said the commission had no control over local disputes.

"We can appeal for local strikes to stop, but we cannot order them", he said.

Solidarity has sent a delegation to Bielsko Biala asking the strikers to return to work.

—Reuters.

## Russia cites CIA 'plots' in reply to Washington

From Michael Binyon  
Moscow, Feb 1

The Russians hit back sharply this weekend at President Reagan's accusation that they were encouraging international terrorism, describing the White House criticism as a new round in America's unbridled slander campaign against the Soviet Union.

An official statement by Tass said the contention that Moscow was involved in terrorism was absurd and had clearly been made in give fresh impetus to the anti-Soviet psychosis being fanned in America.

"Naturally no evidence to support these inventions is given because there is no such evidence in existence. Terrorism as a means of attaining political aims is deeply alien to the Soviet Union."

Tass said the real centre controlling international terrorism was the American Central Intelligence Agency, an organization of "terror, subversion and provocation". It added that American leaders had several times called for the CIA to be given a free hand abroad, which actually amounted to elevating terrorism to the rank of state policy.

The Tass statement gave evidence a detailed list of plots and assassinations carried out by the CIA round the world, citing the attempts on the lives of President Castro of Cuba, Patrice Lumumba, the former Congo Prime Minister, General René Schneider in Chile, the overthrow of the Mossadeq Government in Iran and Kwame Nkrumah in Ghana, and the financing of South Africa of rebels in Angola.

Tass directly accused the CIA of perpetrating the "foul political murder" of Signor Aldo Moro, the former Italian Prime Minister, because he had become "undesirable" to Washington.

Said the CIA was the only intelligence agency whose direct interference in Italian politics had been proved.

In El Salvador, American military support had helped reactionary forces conduct a "veritable war" against the working people, making ruthless terror the official policy.

In Afghanistan, the Americans were supporting "criminal bands" who committed terror and plunder and were frustrating the process of rebuilding the country.

The Tass statement accused American officials of using terrorism at home for political ends, killing undesirable politicians and suppressing dissidents. The news agency cited the assassinations of the Kennedy brothers, Martin Luther King, and participants in the anti-war movement.

At the same time the authorities were continuing in attacks on foreign diplomats and diplomatic missions at the United Nations.

"One has only to look at the facts to see that the United States is the main breeder, organizer and perpetrator of international terrorism", Tass concluded.

The Russians have clearly been startled by the suddenness and vehemence of the attacks on them by the new President and by Mr Alexander Haig, his Secretary of State, which they attribute to the Administration's need to find a new anti-Soviet policy to replace the discredited Carter campaign.



President Reagan: 'New anti-Soviet campaign'.



Winter sun at the meridian: Cutty Sark silhouetted against the Greenwich sky yesterday.

## Mrs Williams decides this week on NEC seat

By George Clark  
Political Correspondent

Mrs Shirley Williams, a leading member of the new Council for Social Democracy, will decide this week whether to resign from the national executive of the Labour Party where she has been under attack for seeming to be engaged in the formation of a new centre party.

Mr Michael Foot, Leader of the Opposition, will be seeing Mrs Williams, a former minister, today, to try to persuade her to remain with the party.

Leaders of her union, the Association of Professional, Executive, Clerical and Computer Staff, appealed to her over the weekend to "stay and fight" within the party for the changes in policy and organization that she wants.

There is no sign, so far, that any other Labour backbencher is ready to follow the example of Mr David Owen, the former Foreign Secretary, who announced on Friday that he will not be standing as a Labour candidate at the next election, though he will remain as Labour MP for Plymouth, Devonport, for the duration of the present Parliament.

Another leading member of the dissident group, Mr William Rodgers, MP for Teesside, Stockton, has resigned from the Shadow Cabinet, but he stays as a Labour MP and is delaying for a few weeks any announcement he may have to make about his future.

In a speech to miners in Gareshead on Saturday, however, he gave a clear indication that his disillusionment with the party is not likely to be dispelled unless the idea of having an electoral college to elect the party leader is abandoned.

"It is the principle of an electoral college that is wrong,"

the proportions are trifling matter", he said. "It is wrong that trade union block votes should determine who should be the Prime Minister."

In a reference to Mrs Williams yesterday, Mr Wedgwood Benn said: "I do not think it is moral for someone to sit in the highest echelons of one party in order to get enough time to prepare another party."

He was repeating an accusation that he made directly to Mrs Williams at the party executive meeting last Wednesday, and it is a point that must have been made.

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## China cancels orders for modern plants

From Peter Hazelhurst  
Tokyo, Feb 1

China seems to be cutting back on its modernization programme again and has suspended work on two large petrochemical plants in Nanjing and Shengli in the province of Shandong which were to be built by Japanese companies. As a result, the authorities in Peking are cancelling big Japanese contracts for equipment for the project.

A Japanese consortium, including C. Itoh and Company, the large trading house, and the Toyo Engineering Corporation has already begun to construct equipment for the plants.

This is the second big blow this year to Japanese businessmen who have won lucrative contracts in China since a more moderate regime assumed power in Peking.

China's latest decision to suspend work and orders for the two proposed ethylene plants was transmitted to the Japanese Government last week shortly after Beijing scrapped another big order with a Japanese company, announcing that it has suspended work on the second phase of the Baoshan steel mill near Shanghai, another major project designed to transform China into a modern industrial state.

A part of the powerful Japanese heavy industry group, Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, was commissioned last year to provide China with \$425m worth of equipment for a hot strip mill. The order was approved and ratified by the Japanese and Chinese governments last August but was cancelled without reason last month.

The Japanese Government subsequently lodged a protest with the Chinese Embassy in Tokyo last month pointing out that Beijing's unilateral decision to cancel the orders will impair economic relations between the two countries and harm China's integrity.

The latest decision by China to cancel orders for two petrochemical plants has more than alarmed Japanese businessmen and indicates that China has probably over-extended itself in modernizing its industry.

"We will hold talks with Chinese representatives in the near future to find out what has happened", a senior official in the Japanese Ministry for Trade and Industry says.

Resources strained: The cumulative effect of prolonged drought in northern China in conjunction with severe floods in central provinces is imposing a severe strain on the country's resources, according to a United Nations mission back in Geneva after almost three weeks in China (Our Geneva Correspondent writes).

Sent by the United Nations disaster relief office (UNDRO) to assess emergency needs, the mission has reported that desperate heavy losses in crops and livestock, basic minimal needs of the population are being met. But the situation could worsen over the next few months.

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## Savings bonds 'unfair to building societies'

Mr Richard Weir, secretary-general, Building Societies Association, yesterday accused the Government of unfair competition amounting to almost an abuse of power in the battle to attract personal savings.

By declaring that it would raise the money it needed by hook or by crook, the Government was speaking with the voice of the monopolist, he said.

If its rivalry with the societies continued, higher mortgage rates were the only possible outcome.

The government decision to raise large sums from personal savers would "reverberate through every building society decision on interest rates and mortgage rates for some time to come", he said. The societies did not object to fair competition from the banks; national savings or anyone else, but this was not fair competition.

Mr Weir said yesterday that the typical whining we have come to expect from leaders of the Building Societies Association to excuse their own commercial inadequacies.

"Mr Weir probably has not noticed that the inflation rate is falling rapidly. Perhaps he can explain to his bemused customers how such a situation can lead to mortgage repayment increases."

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## Raj's pukka traditions observed at Lagos polo

From Karan Thapar  
Lagos, Feb 1

It was champagne and cigars at the Lagos Polo Club this weekend. The "international polo tournament" was in its final stages, and although no foreign teams were participating, there were plenty of hearty expatriates, enthusiastic Nigerians and masses of old Raj nostalgists.

Polo is the game of the northern Hausa Muslim elite. In Nigeria, it is also the special preserve of army generals and royal emirs. Consequently, polo is the most hated symbol of northern dominance in the eyes of the westerners in Lagos. The Unity Party Governor of Lagos has plans to convert the polo fields of Ikoyi into low-income government residential quarters.

This weekend, however, that threat seemed non-existent. Military police, responding in crisp white cravats, bright red caps and stiffly starched khaki, escorted guests to sofas set on carpeted lawns under gaily coloured marquees. Stewards bearing polo club crests passed drinks, while the "old boys" settled in to watch the chukkas.

The spectacle was more social than sporting. Rich northern Agbadas mixed freely with the tribals and tweeds, bright cocktail dresses flashed through expensive leather boots and army crests. An end-of-tournament dinner dance was held on Saturday night with a barbecue and regimental bands on the lawns; members only and compulsory black tie.

The chief guest on Sunday was President Shagari. Among the players was the Governor of Sokoto, the Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives, a former Chief of Army Staff and several inspector generals of police.

The covered gold cup was a gift from a rich northern businessman Alhaji Dantata. He too was playing, and boasted the highest handicap, and 48 of the horses on the field were owned by him.

Nigerian Army officers are very pukka about their polo. The "ungentlemanly" American-style helmet was not to be seen. The horses were beautiful thoroughbreds—preferably Arab ponies, otherwise Argentine.

The main games were between the Emir of Katsina's team and Kaduna's Kaduna Da'la. The chukkas were swift; the athletic northern army captains and their younger playboy brothers are fearless riders. These sons of feudal landlords or wealthy businessmen play a hard-hitting, daredevil game. What they lack in terms of skill and artfulness they compensate for with sheer grace and furious action. As the informed expatriates will tell you: "They have polo in their blood."

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## Budget move to ease industry's taxation burden

The Government is considering a fundamental switch in taxation from the industrial sector towards the financial sector, though whether there will be a "windfall" tax on clearing banks' profits introduced in next month's Budget is still in doubt. The Prime Minister is known to be critical of the part played by the banks in expanding the money supply. It is also thought possible that the Chancellor will cut interest rates in the Budget. Page 21

## Bomb warning to shops by Scotland Yard

While experts are examining four bombs left in a west London store, Scotland Yard warned shop security staff that the public should be alert for incendiary devices. The bombs discovered in a store on Saturday are similar to those used by the Provisional IRA. Page 4

## Europe MPs call for Pretoria oil embargo

Brussels MPs examining South Africa's oil imports have accused European and American companies of playing a key role in helping Pretoria to maintain its supplies despite an embargo operated by most oil exporting countries. Page 6

## Iran confrontation

President Bani-Sadr of Iran appears to have spurned any compromise with the ruling Islamic Republican Party. He said the party's aims were "to change Iran into a graveyard". Page 6

## Bringing seamen home

Striking seamen stranded in ports all over the world are to be brought home with the aid of cash sought by their leaders from more than a hundred unions. Page 2

## Onslaught on public sector pay curb

The government's attempt to impose a 6 per cent cap limit on public sector pay rises will come under pressure this week from leaders of the water workers, hospital manual staff, civil servants and power station workers. Page 2

## Keyboard instruments: A two-page Special Report on the market in Britain for pianos and early instruments

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William Mann celebrates the eightieth birthday of the singer Gerhard Henschel, and reviews the rebirth of the Stravinsky Festival; Philip Howard on Johnsonian lexicography.

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Lord Chalfont on the new danger signals in the Middle East; For Rokeya a change of heart for the disabled.

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## HOME NEWS

# Water workers begin onslaught on Government's 6 per cent limit for public sector pay rises

By Paul Routledge

Labour Editor

Government attempts to hold down wage rises in the public sector to single figures face an onslaught this week from the leaders of the water workers, hospital manual staff, civil servants and power station workers.

The rejection by 30,000 water workers of a 7.9 per cent "final offer" from the National Water Council has seriously undermined the Government's aim to contain pay increases within a 6 per cent cash limit.

The four unions in the water industry meet tomorrow to consider overwhelming votes for industrial action in the light of an offer of fresh jobs with all employers who have an improved offer in mind.

But Mr Alan Fisher, general secretary of the National Union of Public Employees, and chairman of the TUC this year, last night dashed hopes that the water workers, or any other strongly placed group of public sector employees, would settle for single figure rises without a fight. "Where we feel strong

enough to achieve double figure settlements, we will attempt to do so."

It would be wrong to suppose that water, gas and electricity workers would accept settlements as low as the 7.5 per cent deal agreed last week for about one million local government manual workers. The town hall "dirty jobs" workers feared for 85,000 redundancies in the past year, but the utility workers did not share those fears because they worked in crucial industries where there was not the same risk of redundancy.

The water industry union talks are expected to be followed soon by negotiations with the council on an improved offer. The informal norm for Government utilities has been increased to 9.9 per cent by the British Gas Corporation in talks with the leaders of 40,000 gas workers last week.

But water industry union negotiators have their eyes set on the 13 per cent settlement achieved by the miners and the rate of price inflation, which is still running at about 15 per

cent. The power workers, due to receive their first pay offer on Thursday, have similar ambitions.

Leaders of the 250,000 National Health Service ancillary staff, who have rejected a 6 per cent offer are demanding a meeting with Mr Patrick Jenkin, Secretary of State for Social Services, to discover the Government's intentions on the 1981-82 cash limit for the health service. The NHS manual settlement is already six weeks arrear, and the health service unions are claiming rises at least in line with the 7.5 per cent given to their town hall counterparts.

On Thursday unions representing 500,000 white collar civil servants will fix a common pay claim. It is expected to range from 15 to 20 per cent, depending on job and movements in comparable private sector salaries.

The public sector pay tension is likely to effect talks on the economy on Wednesday between ministers, employers and trade union leaders, he under the auspices of the National Economic Development Council.

## Mrs Thatcher sticks to her guns

By George Clark

Political Correspondent

Unemployment figures will continue to rise but there is no question of the Government abandoning its policy of reducing inflation, Mrs Margaret Thatcher said yesterday.

"It is just at this stage, when other governments have started to get things right, that they have taken fright and cut and run," she said. "The Prime Minister said: 'They have deflated the economy, which is just a polite word for saying that you create a lot of money and pump it in. We will not do that. You get a few extra jobs, but all your prices and costs rise; it affects the whole of business and industry and exports, and very soon the consequences are that you get even more unemployment.'"

"What do you do then—pump more money in? That way lies madness. That way lies hyperinflation. We will not stagger from expedient to expedient. We will not reflate."

Mrs Thatcher, who was interviewed by Mr Brian Walden in the independent television programme *Weekend World*, was highly critical of the amount of money that had to be provided for nationalized industries. "I could have income tax up in the pound lower were it not for the amount which we have to pay to the nationalized industries," she said.

The Government had prepared the way for parts of the nationalized industries to be "floated off" to the private sector when the market conditions were right.

When questioned about the decision to give further government aid to British Leyland, Mrs Thatcher said that the Government had found it a difficult decision to provide another £1,000m, but the company was doing well in some respects under Sir Michael Edwards.

It was getting productivity up, getting rid of the 'wreckers', and creating a new spirit. "I would never want to take on another British Leyland, and I would not choose to be in it at all."

Pressed to say what the Government intended to do about increasing unemployment, Mrs Thatcher said it was spending £184m this year in providing opportunities for young people to get work experience, on retraining schemes, compensation for short-time working, and investment. These temporary aids, however, must not jeopardize the main object of getting inflation down.

Mr Peter Shore, the shadow Chancellor, said later that it was an astonishing interview. Asked in a BBC radio programme whether he thought Mrs Thatcher had shown conviction in her policies, he said he thought "obsession" would be the better word.

## Union acts to bring home strike crews

By Our Labour Editor

Striking seamen stranded in ports all over the world are to be repatriated to the United Kingdom with the help of cash being sought from more than 100 unions affiliated to the TUC.

As the merchant shipping dispute goes into its fourth week today, the National Union of Seamen is appealing for funds from the labour movement to bring home crews who are on strike in support of a wage claim.

Money raised from other unions will go into a repatriation fund to be spent on fares home for crews taking industrial action who have been stopped pay and want to return. More than 300 seamen have been repatriated from European ports, and arrangements were being made last night to fly home the crew of the Ben Line cargo vessel, *Grey Hunter*, halted by the dispute in Cartagena, near Alicante.

While the repatriation exercise gets under way, further disruption of shipping is taking place. Townsend Thoresen ferries operating on the Felixstowe-Zeebrugge link were stopped at the weekend, and further strikes are expected.

A spokesman for the seamen's union said last night: "We expect that there will be more strikes, and they are genuine lightning stoppages." Union leaders say that this spontaneous escalation of the dispute has halted 20 ships, sixth of the United Kingdom merchant shipping fleet, in ports from Britain to Australia. According to the union tally, which is usually much larger than figures supplied by employers, 88 vessels are tied up abroad, and 119 in home ports.

On Merseyside, unsuccessful efforts were made in the dawn fog yesterday to move the *Ellerman Line* freighter *City of York* out of the Gladstone dock at Bootle. Pickets were posted, and they are also delaying two other ships bound for Africa. Against that background of hardening industrial action, talks were going on at Southampton last night with the management of Townsend Thoresen on wage rates for 250 crewmen operating out of the port. Union officials insisted that no settlement would be agreed unless the company conceded the union's demand for overtime to be paid at time-and-a-half.

## Birching demand after gang stabs football supporter

Police believe youths aged 12 or 13 might have been involved in a gang attack in which a Crystal Palace football supporter was stabbed near Middlesbrough's ground on Saturday.

The supporter, Mr Gregory Brown, aged 21, a bank clerk, of Tower Road, Orpington, South-east London, had an emergency operation and was reported yesterday to be out of danger.

Earlier this season a Middlesbrough supporter was killed after another incident.

## In brief

### Coaster damaged in collision

A British coaster and a German freighter collided in thick fog off Beachy Head, East Sussex, yesterday. No one was injured but the coaster, the *Mara*, was damaged and headed for Shoreham.

The freighter, *Malayan Reeder*, was not damaged and continued to Spain. The coaster had been bound for Rouen.

### Boy killed in empty beer cask blast

Patrick Maughan, aged 16, was killed in the garden of his home in Warwick Road, Sparkhill, Birmingham, yesterday when an empty aluminium beer cask exploded on a bonfire. His father said the boy was burning wood and the cask was killed instantly. A section of the nine-gallon barrel flew over the roof-top and smashed a church window 100 yd away.

### Crash landing

A family of four escaped when their helicopter crashed-landed in a field at High Ongar, Essex, yesterday. Mr Raymond Stephens, aged 43, was piloting his wife Penny, aged 28, and daughters Clare, aged seven, and Louise, aged 16 months, from Stansted to their home at Fyfield, near Ongar.

### Back pain figures

More people were taking time off work because of back trouble than the Back Pain Association said yesterday. The number of days absence had risen to more than 26.4 million in the year to June, 1979, from 18 million.

### £150,000 damages

The owners of a £330,000 yacht damaged by fire in the Mediterranean have been awarded £150,000 by the Court of Session, Edinburgh. The judge ruled that fire-fighting equipment put in by a Scottish company failed to work.

### Bishop's move

The Bishop of Newcastle, the Right Rev Ronald Bowly, will be consecrated Bishop of Southwark today, in succession to Dr Mervyn Stockwood.

### Elderly lobby

The Forum on the Rights of the Elderly to Education was launched yesterday to act as a clearing-house for information and lobby for old people's educational rights.

### Middlesbrough Football Club

repeated his demand for the return of the birch after the incident.

## Little hope of postal strike peace

From John Chartres Manchester

Negotiations between national officials of the Post Office and the Union of Communications Workers continued last night in Manchester, but seemed to offer little hope of an early settlement to the dispute which has disrupted parcel and mail communications in and around the city for nearly a week.

It seems likely that Manchester's inner suburbs will be without postal services again today, and that parcel operations will be suspended again for most of the week in Greater Manchester, Cheshire and Lancashire.

On Saturday volunteers worked overtime to distribute pensions and social security cheques, which had been held up.

## Centralized health damages plea

By Nicholas Timmins

Health authorities are to press the Department of Health and Social Security to change the way damages are awarded against them as funded amid worry that the present system is affecting services for patients.

The National Association of Health Authorities is to urge that future awards above £30,000 should be made from the national health budget as a whole to spread the cost of awards that in some cases are reaching £250,000.

Compensation paid by health authorities in England rose to £175m from just over £700,000 in 1975 to just over £700,000 in 1979, from £220,000 last year.

Last week an award of £240,000 was made against Essex Area Health Authority to a patient paralysed after an operation, and the South West Thames Regional Health Authority had a £95,000 award made against it.

Mr Philip Hunt, acting director of the national association, said: "This is a matter of great concern to us because of the increasing frequency and size of awards by the courts."

Although the medical defence societies meet the doctor's liability in such cases, health authorities often have to pay a share, sometimes more than half, of the damages awarded.

Individual authorities have to meet them from their budgets, which are tied by cash limits. "If you are trying to find £250,000 something has to go, and that something is bound to affect patients' services," he said.

The association fears that the reorganization of the health service into smaller district health authorities in 1982 will make matters much worse because their budgets will be smaller.

Essex Area Health Authority said that, being the second largest in the country, it would be able to meet the £240,000 award from its contingency fund, without cutting patients' services. It did mean, however, that improvements in the service on which the money

## From the grassroots: Many defections from Labour by councillors and activists

# Strong local support for idea of a social democratic party

By Ian Bradley

At first sight, one of the main weaknesses of the social democratic party that seems likely to be formally launched in the early summer would seem to be its lack of local organization and support. As newspaper cartoonists' jokes about wine tastings as a test for membership suggest, the image projected by those associated with the Council for Social Democracy is one of metropolitan urbanity rather than the provincial common touch.

That is partly deliberate. The council does not regard the building up of grassroots support for social democracy as a priority at this stage. It believes rather in working from the centre on the basis of initial support within Parliament and the political establishment. Only when a new party is launched, which seems most likely to be in May, will local support be canvassed and organizations set up.

In fact, there is evidence of considerable grassroots support for a new social democratic party. Apart from the findings of the opinion polls, the dissent MP's have received thousands of letters from Labour voters supporting a breakaway move. Dr David Owen alone had

Shifts of allegiance and formation of new groupings throughout the country provide the beginnings of a local government base for a new national party.

more than 3,000 letters last week.

There have also been some defections from the Labour Party in the past two weeks by prominent local councillors and former activists in the provinces who have formed new social democratic groupings. Taken together, they provide the beginnings of a local government base for a new national party.

In Bristol, Mr Roy Morris, a former deputy leader of the Labour group on the city council, a councillor since 1963 and three times a Labour parliamentary candidate, resigned from the Labour Party last Monday and is now sitting as a social democrat. He is expecting other councillors to follow him and is already in negotiation with Liberals in the Avon area about an electoral alliance.

In Gloucester, Mr Michael Golder, Labour candidate in the last general election, and two Labour members of the city

council resigned from the party a fortnight ago and have set up a steering committee to establish a social democratic party. So far 50 local people have said they want to join, and, again, talks are taking place with the Liberals about a pact.

In Shrewsbury, Mr John Wall, a Labour councillor for six years and party member for 33 years, set up a social democratic group on January 7. The group has about 25 members, including two former mayors, two former councillors, and a sitting member of Shropshire County Council. It expects to fight one or two seats in the county council elections in May.

In London, Mr James Daly, former chairman of the Greater London Council transport committee, left the Labour Party last week after 27 years' membership. He expects to contest Paddington in the GLC elections in May as a Labour moderate and says that social democrats may also stand against official

Labour candidates in Islington and Lambeth.

There are also some local social democratic groups of rather loose standing. The Lincoln Democratic Labour Association, set up in 1972, has 150 members and a county councillor. There is a similar association in Scunthorpe.

In Dudley, Mr Thomas Clitheroe, former leader of the Labour group on the council, and two other Labour councillors resigned from the party last February and now form a social democratic group on the council. Mr Clitheroe estimates that there are about a hundred active social democrats in the West Midlands.

In Kent, seven Labour councillors resigned the party whip shortly before the last general election and six of them now sit as the "borough independent group". Mr Barrie Chambers, their leader, says the group has about fifty active supporters and will probably be fighting some seats in the county council elections.

All these local groups are eagerly awaiting the launching of a national social democratic party. They are at present affiliated to the Social Democratic Alliance (SDA), which was set up in 1975 and pro-

scribed by Labour's national executive last December after it had said that it would put up candidates against left-wing Labour MPs.

At a rally on Saturday, the SDA set up a joint preparatory committee to bring together all local organizations working towards the formation of a new social democratic party at the grassroots. Those associated with the Council for Social Democracy are known to be unhappy about what they see as the witch-hunting activities of the SDA, but it is likely to play a part in building up support for the proposed new party.

Another national organization likely to take a leading part in preparing for the launching of the party is the Campaign for Labour Victory (CLV). Its committee met on Wednesday, when it will consider winding itself up as a right-wing pressure group working within the Labour Party, and committing itself to supporting the new council.

CLV has 5,000 supporters, including many councillors and trade unionists. Mr Alec McGivra, organizing secretary, says he is surprised how many have recently indicated that they favour a breakaway social democratic party outside the Labour Party.



Mr Benn attacks media: Mr Wedgwood working to stop the socialist's message, speaking to young socialists at Rotherham, south-east London, yesterday, said that Britain is a country that has free speech, but not the right to be heard (Nicholas Timmins writes). The press, he said, was access by all points of view to the media.

## Mr Weighell turns in fury on Mr Benn

Continued from page 1

caused her much heart searching. Her closest friends last night said they thought she would decide to make the break.

Mr Benn offered an olive branch as well as criticism. "We must strengthen the unity of the party and encourage the widest possible diversity of opinion and debate within it in the spirit of tolerance and good will," he told London Labour Party Young Socialists at Rotherham.

"I do not want anybody to leave the party; I want to recruit members."

Mr Denis Healey, deputy leader of the party, said he thought those MPs who were contemplating leaving the party were making "an absolutely disastrous error".

Interviewed on LBC news radio, Mr Healey said: "The particular tragedy about the setting up of a Council for Social Democracy is that the step was taken just at the moment when things were swinging our way. I hope that some of those who have made this decision will think better of it."

Asked about Mr Benn's role in the recent party split, Mr Healey said: "I thank his

attempt, for example, to establish the sort of McCarthyite witch-hunt by forcing everybody to sign an oath of loyalty is a sort of mixture of the Spanish Inquisition and the fellow Howard Kirk you know."

Mr Sidney Weighell, general secretary of the National Union of Railwaymen, said on Radio 4 on Saturday that he would rather spit in the eye of Mr Benn than sign the "oath of loyalty" that he had proposed. "Here we have a socialist born with a silver spoon in his mouth, saying to people like me who have experienced inequalities in society that he wants me to sign a declaration of faith in loyalty in the party. The only thing that was absent was the threat that if you do not do it you will be in a salt mine on Monday."

A poll published by *The Sunday Times* yesterday and taken in Labour strongholds in Tyneside, indicated that the main support for a new social democratic party would come from Conservative voters, and that Mr William Rodgers would be in danger of losing his seat if he stood as a social democrat against Labour in a general election tomorrow.

Refer to column, page 14 for leading article, page 15 David Wood column, page 15

## 'Times' printing unions give even chance for agreement over sale

By Our Labour Editor

Printing union leaders, reopening crucial talks with Mr Rupert Murdoch's management today, estimate that he has an even chance of meeting the deadline for agreement on terms to purchase *Times Newspapers Ltd*.

After a week of detailed discussions on proposed redundancies in many areas of the company, the emphasis in negotiations between News International Ltd, managers and the unions shifts this morning to issues of principle on deman-

ning, disputes procedure and a wage freeze.

It seems certain that the printing unions will reject management's proposals for a disciplinary clause in the dispute procedure, and the prospect of compulsory redundancies if there are insufficient volunteers to achieve the required amount of demanning.

One union, the Society of Lithographic Artists, Designers, Engravers and Process Workers (Slade) is not expected to attend the summit at New Printing House Square, while others are

sending national officers rather than general secretaries.

The National Graphical Association, the main craft union, is making urgent talks with Mr Murdoch, who is in Australia, on his insistence that the three *Times* supplements, *Literary, Educational and Higher Education*, must be put out to contract printing from March 15, one day after the putative date for the cessation of publication of all TNL titles by their present owners.

The NGA's ruling national council has been called into

emergency session on Thursday to discuss the issue and the possibility of compulsory redundancies at Gray's Inn Road.

Craft printing union negotiators last night also ruled out acceptance of the Murdoch management disciplinary clause designed to halt unofficial walk-outs on the grounds that a similar demand across the whole industry from the Newspaper Publishers Association has been rejected.

Mr Leslie Dixon, president of the NGA, estimated there was a fifty-fifty chance of

reaching new operating agreements with the printing unions before the deadline of March 12 midnight.

If a deal was not struck by that date, and Thomson is vowing the threat to break off negotiations with Mr Murdoch in favour of other bids for all or parts of the company, then he feared for the future of *The Times*. "I don't think anybody will buy *The Times*," he said, "not as a separate title."

Today's talks were described as a watershed by several printing union negotiators.

## Weather forecast and recordings



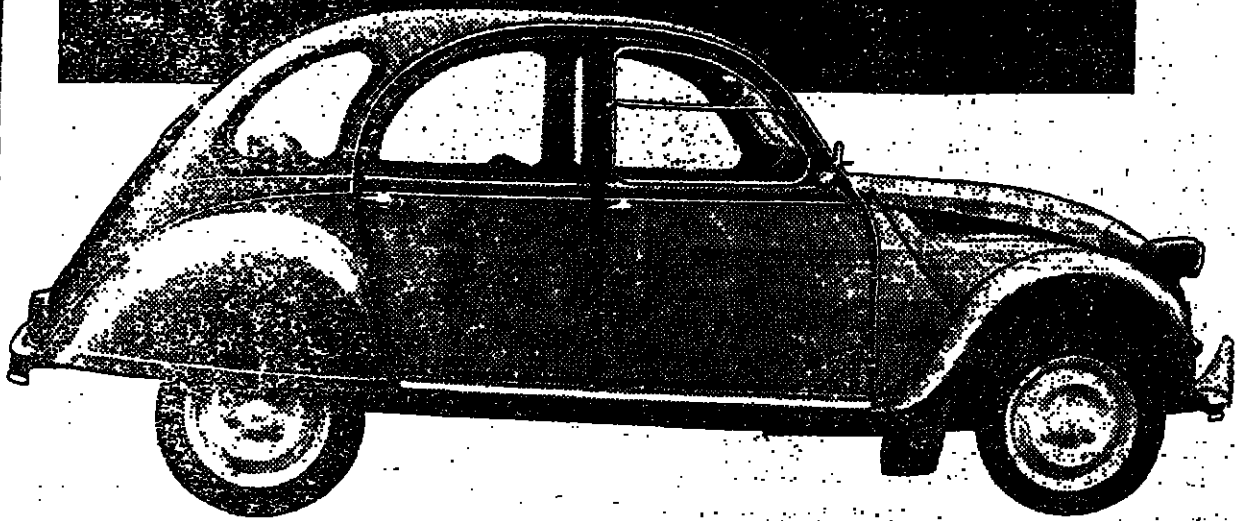
NOON TODAY Pressure is shown in millibars. FRONTS Warm Cold Occluded

Clouds show: 1-2, scattered; 3-4, broken; 5-6, overcast; 7-8, heavy rain; 9-10, heavy snow; 11-12, heavy sleet; 13-14, heavy hail; 15-16, heavy drizzle; 17-18, heavy fog; 19-20, heavy mist; 21-22, heavy rain; 23-24, heavy snow; 25-26, heavy sleet; 27-28, heavy hail; 29-30, heavy drizzle; 31-32, heavy fog; 33-34, heavy mist; 35-36, heavy rain; 37-38, heavy snow; 39-40, heavy sleet; 41-42, heavy hail; 43-44, heavy drizzle; 45-46, heavy fog; 47-48, heavy mist; 49-50, heavy rain; 51-52, heavy snow; 53-54, heavy sleet; 55-56, heavy hail; 57-58, heavy drizzle; 59-60, heavy fog; 61-62, heavy mist; 63-64, heavy rain; 65-66, heavy snow; 67-68, heavy sleet; 69-70, heavy hail; 71-72, heavy drizzle; 73-74, heavy fog; 75-76, heavy mist; 77-78, heavy rain; 79-80, heavy snow; 81-82, heavy sleet; 83-84, heavy hail; 85-86, heavy drizzle; 87-88, heavy fog; 89-90, heavy mist; 91-92, heavy rain; 93-94, heavy snow; 95-96, heavy sleet; 97-98, heavy hail; 99-100, heavy drizzle; 101-102, heavy fog; 103-104, heavy mist; 105-106, heavy rain; 107-108, heavy snow; 109-110, heavy sleet; 111-112, heavy hail; 113-114, heavy drizzle; 115-116, heavy fog; 117-118, heavy mist; 119-120, heavy rain; 121-122, heavy snow; 123-124, heavy sleet; 125-126, heavy hail; 127-128, heavy drizzle; 129-130, heavy fog; 131-132, heavy mist; 133-134, heavy rain; 135-136, heavy snow; 137-138, heavy sleet; 139-140, heavy hail; 141-142, heavy drizzle; 143-144, heavy fog; 145-146, heavy mist; 147-148, heavy rain; 149-150, heavy snow; 151-152, heavy sleet; 153-154, heavy hail; 155-156, heavy drizzle; 157-158, heavy fog; 159-160, heavy mist; 161-162, heavy rain; 163-164, heavy snow; 165-166, heavy sleet; 167-168, heavy hail; 169-170, heavy drizzle; 171-172, heavy fog; 173-174, heavy mist; 175-176, heavy rain; 177-178, heavy snow; 179-180, heavy sleet; 181-182, heavy hail; 183-184, heavy drizzle; 185-186, heavy fog; 187-188, heavy mist; 189-190, heavy rain; 191-192, heavy snow; 193-194, heavy sleet; 195-196, heavy hail; 197-198, heavy drizzle; 199-200, heavy fog; 201-202, heavy mist; 203-204, heavy rain; 205-206, heavy snow; 207-208, heavy sleet; 209-210, heavy hail; 211-212, heavy drizzle; 213-214, heavy fog; 215-216, heavy mist; 217-218, heavy rain; 219-220, heavy snow; 221-222, heavy sleet; 223-224, heavy hail; 225-226, heavy drizzle; 227-228, heavy fog; 229-230, heavy mist; 231-232, heavy rain; 233-234, heavy snow; 235-236, heavy sleet; 237-238, heavy hail; 239-240, heavy drizzle; 241-242, heavy fog; 243-244, heavy mist; 245-246, heavy rain; 247-248, heavy snow; 249-250, heavy sleet; 251-252, heavy hail; 253-254, heavy drizzle; 255-256, heavy fog; 257-258, heavy mist; 259-260, heavy rain; 261-262, heavy snow; 263-264, heavy sleet; 265-266, heavy hail; 267-268, heavy drizzle; 269-270, heavy fog; 271-272, heavy mist; 273-274, heavy rain; 275-276, heavy snow; 277-278, heavy sleet; 279-280, heavy hail; 281-282, heavy drizzle; 283-284, heavy fog; 285-286, heavy mist; 287-288, heavy rain; 289-290, heavy snow; 291-292, heavy sleet; 293-294, heavy hail; 295-296, heavy drizzle; 297-298, heavy fog; 299-300, heavy mist; 301-302, heavy rain; 303-304, heavy snow; 305-306, heavy sleet; 307-308, heavy hail; 309-310, heavy drizzle; 311-312, heavy fog; 313-314, heavy mist; 315-316, heavy rain; 317-318, heavy snow; 319-320, heavy sleet; 321-322, heavy hail; 323-324, heavy drizzle; 325-326, heavy fog; 327-328, heavy mist; 329-330, heavy rain; 331-332, heavy snow; 333-334, heavy sleet; 335-336, heavy hail; 337-338, heavy drizzle; 339-340, heavy fog; 341-342, heavy mist; 343-344, heavy rain; 345-346, heavy snow; 347-348, heavy sleet; 349-350, heavy hail; 351-352, heavy drizzle; 353-354, heavy fog; 355-356, heavy mist; 357-358, heavy rain; 359-360, heavy snow; 361-362, heavy sleet; 363-364, heavy hail; 365-366, heavy drizzle; 367-368, heavy fog; 369-370, heavy mist; 371-372, heavy rain; 373-374, heavy snow; 375-376, heavy sleet; 377-378, heavy hail; 379-380, heavy drizzle; 381-382, heavy fog; 383-384, heavy mist; 385-386, heavy rain; 387-388, heavy snow; 389-390, heavy sleet; 391-392, heavy hail; 393-394, heavy drizzle; 395-396, heavy fog; 397-398, heavy mist; 399-400, heavy rain; 401-402, heavy snow; 403-404, heavy sleet; 405-406, heavy hail; 407-408, heavy drizzle; 409-410, heavy fog; 411-412, heavy mist; 413-414, heavy rain; 415-416, heavy snow; 417-418, heavy sleet; 419-420, heavy hail; 421-422, heavy drizzle; 423-424, heavy fog; 425-426, heavy mist; 427-428, heavy rain; 429-430, heavy snow; 431-432, heavy sleet; 433-434, heavy hail; 435-436, heavy drizzle; 437-438, heavy fog; 439-440, heavy mist; 441-442, heavy rain; 443-444, heavy snow; 445-446, heavy sleet; 447-448, heavy hail; 449-450, heavy drizzle; 451-452, heavy fog; 453-454, heavy mist; 455-456, heavy rain; 457-458, heavy snow; 459-460, heavy sleet; 461-462, heavy hail; 463-464, heavy drizzle; 465-466, heavy fog; 467-468, heavy mist; 469-470, heavy rain; 471-472, heavy snow;



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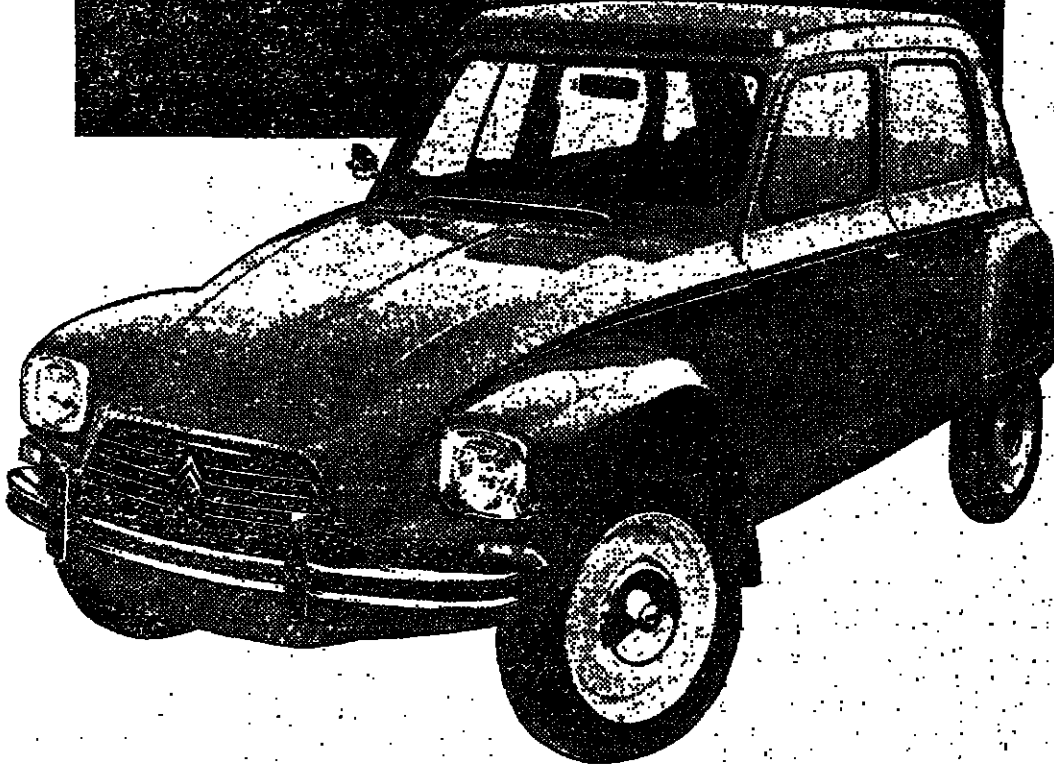
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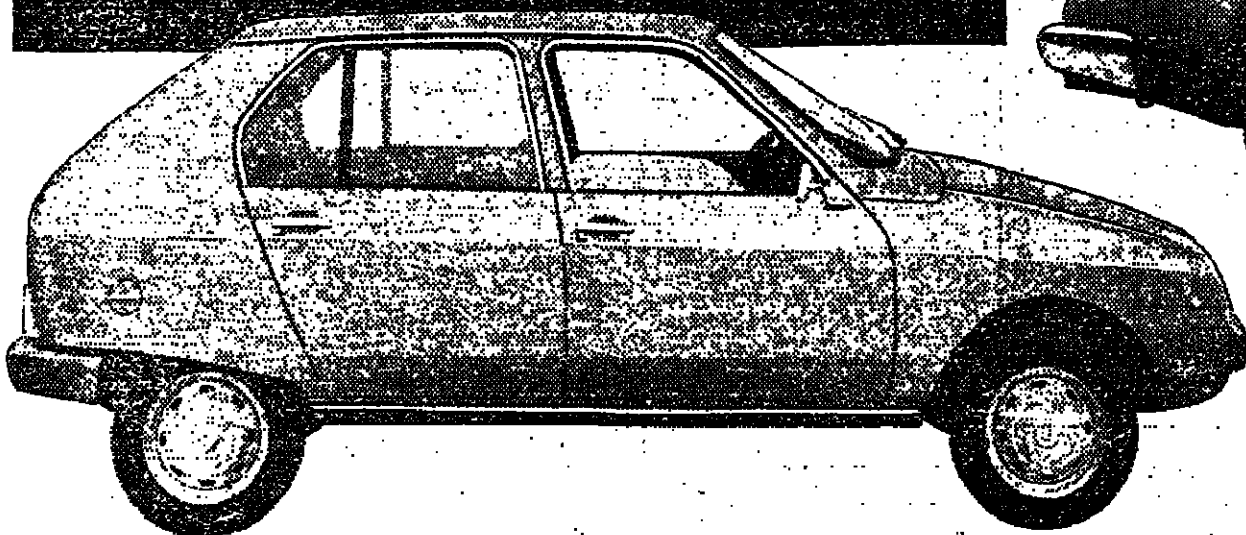
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## HOME NEWS

## Scotland Yard warns shop security staff to be wary of bombs

By Stewart Tendler  
Crime Reporter

Explosives experts will today examine four incendiary devices, built into cassette tape boxes, which were found in a West London furniture store on Saturday. The devices are understood to be similar to those used by the Provisional IRA.

Some large West End stores were searched for explosives yesterday and Scotland Yard asked security staff to check shops before they opened today.

"There is always a possibility that more of these devices were planted. We are advising store security staff to be on the look-out today to make sure there is nothing out of place. We would also urge the public to be on the alert", Scotland Yard said.

The cassettes containing explosives were left in C and M Discount Furniture Warehouse in High Street, Southall, on Saturday. Shortly before closing time one was discovered by a customer who raised the alarm. The store was evacuated and another three explosive cassettes were found hidden in furniture.

One of the bombs is reported to have started to ignite as it was being examined, but was made safe without anyone being injured.

The cassette devices are said to be complex and unlikely to be the work of amateurs. Incendiaries of that type have been used by the Provisional

IRA with some success in Northern Ireland during attacks on shopping centres.

They have also been used in Britain and a number were discovered in central London shops during the bombing campaign of 1976 to 1977.

If the Southall bombs were the work of the Provisionals it would mark their fourth attack in London since last December. The first was the bombing of a Territorial Army drill hall in Hammersmith; shortly before the New Year an attack was attempted on a gas works in east London and last month a building at RAF Uxbridge was devastated.

After that last attack the Provisionals announced they were opening a fresh offensive in mainland Britain, and Scotland Yard declared that an active service unit could be operating in the London area.

Yesterday members of Scotland Yard's anti-terrorist squad were examining the shop and were joined by Commander Michael Richards, who is in charge of the unit.

So far no group has admitted planting the incendiaries and detectives are waiting for a pronouncement from explosives men at the Woolwich Arsenal. A clear reason for the attack has still to be found if it is the work of the Provisionals. If it is, there will be some surprise that they have chosen a target so far from the centre of London and with no apparent significance.

## £7.71 council house average rent

By Christopher Warman  
Local Government Correspondent

The average council house rent in England and Wales last year was £7.71 a week before rebates, according to statistics published today by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy.

The figure, based on returns for April, 1980, compares with £6.40 a week the year before, an increase of 20 per cent. The inflation rate over that period was 22 per cent.

For the coming year, Mr Michael Heseltine, Secretary of State for the Environment, has asked for rent increases of about £3.25.

At the time of the survey council house rents were lowest in the Yorkshire and Humberside region, where the average weekly rent was £6.63. In other regions the averages were £6.91 in the North, £6.92 in the East Midlands, £7.09 in the North-west, £7.33 in East Anglia, £7.83 in the West Midlands, £7.85 in Wales, £8.08 in the South-west, and £8.89 in the South-east.

The survey, which covered 86 per cent of council houses in England and Wales, shows that rents on older properties are lower than on new properties.

About one million households out of an estimated total of 5,243,000 council homes received rent rebates during a sample week in May, 1980, with an average rebate of £4.40. The previous year an estimated 960,000 households received rebates averaging £3.61.

Islington council has announced a rent increase of about £3 a week, or 33 per cent. Housing Rents Statistics in April 1980 (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy, 1 Buckingham Place, London SW1E 6HS, £10).

## Friendly farewell for Anna Ford

ITN said after the announcement on Saturday that Anna Ford would read her last news bulletin in March that her departure date was mutually and amicably agreed.

Miss Ford and Angela Rippon, who read her last BBC news on Friday, will present programmes on breakfast television when it starts in 1983.

## Assault-case police team plea rejected

By Our Crime Reporter

Proposals for a detective force to investigate complaints of serious assault by policemen have, it is understood, been rejected by a Home Office working party which will report its findings in the next few weeks.

Instead of the special squad, the working party suggests, the existing system of inquiries could be strengthened by making it mandatory for chief constables to call in officers from another force to investigate a complaint.

At the same time a figure such as the Director of Public Prosecutions or the chairman of the Police Complaints Board could act as an independent overseer and act as a link between the investigators and the investigated.

The possibility of a special squad was put forward last year in the first triennial report of the Police Complaints Board. It was suggested the squad should have an independent head with some judicial experience.

The report came after several cases of death in police custody or during arrest had caused a controversy. Mr William Whitelaw, the Home Secretary, immediately announced the formation of the working party.

The working party included representatives of the Association of Chief Police Officers, the Police Superintendents' Association, the Police Federation, the Metropolitan Police, the Director of Public Prosecutions, the Police Complaints Board and the Home Office.

The police representatives argued against the formation of the squad on practical grounds while the DPP felt that an independent head, possibly deciding on matters such as prosecutions, would not be a role.

The examination of the practicalities showed that a squad, established regionally or nationally, might be expensive and under used. Questions arose over the type of officer seconded to work for it.

The working party has also found difficulty in establishing what would constitute a serious assault as opposed to one which did not require investigation.

Mr Whitelaw may consider passing the report on to the Police Advisory Board for evaluation before taking a decision.

## Files disclose extent of spy's access to sensitive Far East intelligence

## Burgess knew US analysis of Russian aid

By Peter Hennessy

Any lingering impression that Guy Burgess, the British diplomat who spied for Russia was a low-ranking official of outrageous personal habits with little information of value to pass to Soviet intelligence is dispelled by recently declassified Foreign Office documents.

The papers, discovered at the Public Record Office last week, show that during his time as a grade 4 officer in the junior branch of the Diplomatic Service on the China and Philippines desk of the Foreign Office, which spanned the period between Mao Tse-tung's seizure of power in Peking in September, 1949, and the outbreak of the Korean War in June, 1950, Burgess saw reports from some of the most sensitive British and American intelligence organizations.

They included Whitehall's Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC), the War Office's M12 branch of military intelligence, and similar material from the Supreme Command Allied Powers, Tokyo, General Douglas MacArthur's headquarters in the Far East.

The Burgess files, contained in the records of the Foreign Office's Far Eastern Department for 1950 and released under the 30-year rule, were discovered by Mr Christopher Catherwood, a graduate student of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge.

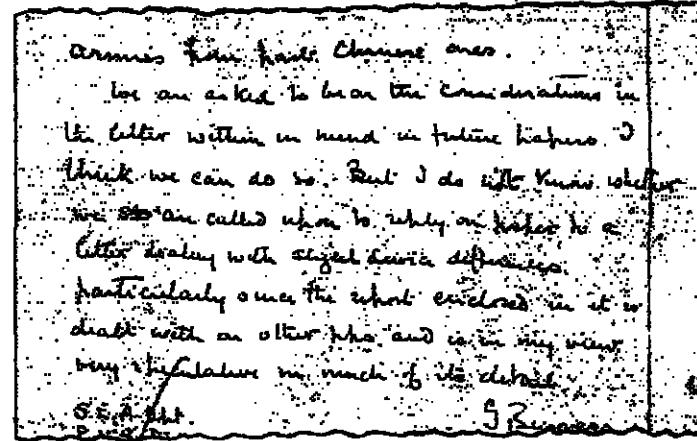
Of particular value to Mos-



Guy Burgess: Scornful.

cow would have been an M12 report of April 5, 1950, containing "a summary of all information received concerning Russian assistance to the Chinese Communist forces" about which Burgess wrote a long minute, in his customary bright blue ink and neat hand, on April 29. In it Burgess makes clear his knowledge that "these papers contain the JIC view on the nature of Russian air assistance".

The secret M12 report goes into immense detail listing, by name in some cases, Soviet military personnel drafted into China after the revolution, the weapons they brought with them, including Spitfires and Mustangs acquired by the Soviet



A letter in Burgess's hand casts doubt on a report.

Union during the Second World War, the aircraft they were constructing, and the training offered to Mao's forces.

The outer cover of the Foreign Office file in which the report is preserved describes it as "compiled by the War Office setting out the most important information available to them".

The view Burgess minuted for his Foreign Office employers, if not his Soviet patrons, argued that:

"On the one hand, if the Russians lend modern jet fighters it is thought likely that a Chinese air force would not be the recipients (ie, complete Soviet units would be lent), no post war planes of Soviet design have been known to be lent to any country, and just

have been seen over China. On the other hand, it seems quite possible that a Chinese Communist air force could be achieved fairly rapidly.

Burgess delighted in pouring scorn on the gullibility of United States intelligence in Tokyo in buying and believing fabricated reports, as Burgess saw them, from the Kuomintang forces of Chiang Kai-shek about what was happening in mainland China. However, he was not alone in the Foreign Office in discounting the value of such sources.

In May, 1951, Burgess defected to Russia with his friend and fellow spy, Mr Donald Maclean. He died in Moscow in 1963.



The maisonette where three of a family of five died.

## Father and daughters die in London maisonette fire

Two children and their father died in a fire at their home in London early yesterday when their mother and elder sister watched helplessly from the street.

The dead were Mr Gordon Richards, aged 36, and his daughters Donna, aged six and Tammy, aged three. Mrs Jean Richards was walking the family dog when the fire broke out in their maisonette in Grosvenor Avenue, Islington.

Her eldest daughter Susan, aged 16, rushed out when the fire started. She and her mother stood in the street shouting to the family to get out.

Mr Alfred Woolley, who lives in the next door maisonette in the block of Greater London Council flats, said: "The first I knew about the fire was when I heard the sound of breaking glass and the woman screaming at her family from the road."

"She was shouting that the flat was on fire and to get out. But by then there was nothing they could do."

As the fire swept through the ground and first-floor maisonette three railway workers passing by ran to an upstairs maisonette to evacuate a mother and her two young children who were asleep.

## Police break up gypsies' bare-knuckle prize fight before crowd of 600

From Our Correspondent  
Cambridge

Bare-knuckle prize fighting has returned secretly to Britain, according to Chief Supt Bernard Hosson, head of Cambridge city police.

After police yesterday broke up a crowd of 600 gypsies and travelling folk who had poured into Cambridge to watch an illegal bare-knuckle contest, Mr Hosson said: "There have been reports from other parts of the country where trouble has broken out after contests for money have been staged."

Similar contests had taken place in Essex and Yorkshire. Police arrived in Fen Road, Chesterton, as best of up to 5,000 were being laid. They found the muddy lane blocked by hundreds of cars which included Rolls-Royces, Mercedes, and Jaguars. Many men were perched in trees seeking a grandstand view of the fight, which was about to begin.

Chief Inspector Steven Stafford arrived with six uniformed men to investigate the mass of men and vehicles in the lane, where many itinerants live.

He said: "I have never seen anything like it in my 25 years' service. There were gypsies and travellers from all over the country in new and expensive cars blocking the road and side bets of £1,000 were being laid."

It could have been a very nasty situation, for whichever man won there would have been trouble from the losers with all that money involved."

"By the time we had forced our way to the centre of the lane the fighters had gone. Our aim was to prevent trouble, and I gave the crowd 20 minutes to disperse. Many were very nasty because they had travelled so far and there was a lot of haggling over bets which had been laid."

"But to our astonishment there was a mass exodus of angry men in beautiful cars and they had all gone before reinforcements arrived."

The fight was due to start as the police arrived. "There was no sign of a ring. I gathered that the men would form a human ring around the fighters", Mr Stafford said.

## School meal said to be worse than workhouse's

Children in Blackburn are being served worse meals at school than those eaten by workhouse vagrants 50 years ago, Mr Jack Straw, Labour MP for Blackburn, said yesterday.

He plans to raise the matter in the Commons and protest personally to Mr Mark Carlisle, Secretary of State for Education and Science.

Mr Straw said the menu for Blackburn's primary school children last Thursday was one sausage, two slices of bread, a cornflake cake and a glass of water.

The workhouse menu in Blackburn 50 years ago was: bread, 8oz; cooked or tinned meat, 2oz; cheese, 2oz; hot potatoes, 4oz; fruit.

Mr Michael Fitzherbert, chairman of Lancashire County Council's education committee, said last night that the children paid 40p a day for a "nutritionally balanced snack of two light courses".

"The children like the snacks and there is no waste," he said. Primary responsibility for feeding the children rested with parents.

## The library that helps and comforts MPs

By a Staff Reporter

The complex organization and specialist services of that unique institution, the House of Commons Library, are described in a recently published book by Mr Dermot Englefield, the deputy librarian.

Mr Englefield says his book, *Parliament and Information*, describes the enormous changes that have taken place at the heart of the nation's information network in recent years.

It discusses the unique quality of the Commons Library, the only place a member of Parliament can go for confidential information from increasingly specialist staff who have no axe to grind.

The library, Mr Englefield adds, is "comfortable to write in, to read in, to research in, to rest in; above all, except during very restricted hours, it is private to members who are beyond the reach of the outside world."

It is almost always open, staffed and organized to work to the level required and to tight deadlines. Mr Englefield says it provides a personal and confidential service so that members need not reveal their hand to civil servants or to their parties.

The computer revolution arrived at Westminster with the launch a few weeks ago of a development plan.

Mr Englefield also looks at the way Parliament is reported to the outside world.

Despite the introduction of parliamentary broadcasting, he writes, the portrait of Parliament, whether factual or impressionistic, that comes from the professional journalist will continue to be the most usual picture of the elected seen by the electorate.

*Parliament and Information* (LibRARY Association Publishing, £7.50 hardback, £4.75 paperback).

## WEST EUROPE

## Frankfurt protest over El Salvador terror ends in mass violence

From Gretel Spitzer  
Berlin, Feb 1

A protest demonstration in Frankfurt against "the terror of the military regime in El Salvador" supported by the United States got completely out of hand yesterday.

Instead of the 2,000 demonstrators expected by police, some 20,000 West Germans, Latin Americans, Turks and other foreign nationals marched through the city. Many leather-jacketed demonstrators wore crash helmets and masks.

A group of about 80 people broke away from the main demonstration, smashed shop windows, attacked banks and slashed the tyres of cars with American licence plates. Fireworks, were thrown at policemen and police cars daubed with dye and a shop was set on fire.

The damage was estimated at over a million marks (over £200,000). Five young demonstrators were detained and three policemen injured.

The demonstration, organized by the "El Salvador Solidarity Movement" expressing the opposition of the country to West Germany, was supported by various left-wing and church groups.

Placards carried by the demonstrators demanded that the Americans should get out of El Salvador and urged the national protest against "the murder of the people" by the junta.

Herr Karsten Voigt, an SPD deputy and former leader of the Young Social Democrats, was arrested by the rioters but he appealed to the Roman Catholic Church and all West German Christians to show solidarity with the people in El Salvador.

with the people in El Salvador. He urged President Reagan and his Administration to open a dialogue with the opposition in El Salvador.

In West Berlin, the police were on full alert today after three successive nights of violence. Some 150 shops, banks and other buildings were damaged in the riots in the course of which 57 people were arrested. Damage was estimated at over two million marks (nearly £500,000).

The riots were in protest at the lack of cheap housing in the city, and the 14-month sentence on a student jailed for his part in last December's squatter riots.

There has been widespread support for the squatters in view of the city's housing policy, but they are strongly criticized for their violence.

Because of the unsolicited backing of radical elements, the squatters changed their tactics last week. Instead of launching large demonstrations, small groups start trouble in various districts of the city, only to disappear quickly when police arrive, and then resume their protest elsewhere.

To prevent the gathering of such protest groups before they can start smashing windows and damaging property, the number of police patrols, both plain-clothes and uniformed, is to be increased.

Discussions among politicians, church representatives and civic groups on how to get the situation under control continued throughout the weekend. Appeals to squatters not to resort to violence have yet to be heeded but after three nights of violence hopes are not too high.

## Opposition sees road to power

## Bonn coalition fights for survival in Berlin

From Patricia Clough  
Bonn, Feb 1

West German politicians are preparing for a battle in West Berlin the outcome of which could decide the future of the Bonn Government.

The city elections, demanded by a large proportion of West Berliners in the wake of recent political upheavals, will severely test the Social Democrat-Free Democrat coalition which rules both in the city and in Bonn.

A defeat for the coalition in Berlin on May 10 could turn the malaise which has been afflicting the 11-year-old partnership since last October's Bundestag elections into a terminal disease. A victory for the Christian Democrats would be seen as the first big step on the road back to power.

For West Germans, Berlin is not just another big city. Both emotionally and politically the former capital, divided, isolated and dependent on East-West treaties and goodwill, its two million and a half potential hostages to Moscow, is of great importance. For the two parties whose *Ostpolitik* made its existence more secure and its life easier, the loss of Berlin to the Opposition would be a big blow.

The trouble which set off the call for elections was hardly worthy of the city's status.

The Social Democrat Party (SPD) has run the city with only one brief interruption since 1946 and scandals, patronage and malpractices have become an integral part of Berlin political life.

The last straw was a scandal which broke after the Senate, the city Government, guaranteed 90 per cent of a huge loan by the city's bank to a West Berlin building company, Bautechnik.

The company, having lost a huge sum in the Middle East, went into liquidation and the city will somehow have to find D.M.100 (£22.7m). Four senators resigned and a Senate committee is now investigating.

The inquiry will take seven months and the results will probably not come out before the elections.

Then came the second shock. Herr Dietrich Stobbe, the Chief Burgomaster, named four new senators for election by the city parliament and they were re-elected.

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At least four demonstrators were taken to hospital with injuries. Police made 19 arrests.

In Basle, police arrested 13 people in clashes at the end of a week-long series of public meetings organized by a local theatre on the theme "disorders in the state".

Young demonstrators broke up a discussion late on Friday night by throwing eggs, paint and fire-crackers, and then went on a rampage through the city centre, police said.

The disturbances began in Zurich last May, with demands for more local authority grants for youth culture. The troubles have since spread to other Swiss cities.—Reuter.



Dr. Vogel: Outstanding politician.

jected. Deputies from the coalition camp had used the secret vote to torpedo their own people. Shattered, Herr Stobbe resigned.

Seizing their opportunity, the Christian Democrats started collecting signatures to petition referendum for new elections.

The avalanche of signatures several times the minimum 80,000 required, showed the Berliners wanted to voice the opinion. Soon the coalition parties realized that election had to come and without waiting for the referendum they fixed the date for May 10.

Meanwhile, the SPD tried to save the situation. Clear drastic steps were necessary. They even considered sending Herr Willy Brandt, former Chancellor and now party chairman, back to his old job: Chief Burgomaster.

Finally Herr Helmut Schmidt the Chancellor sent Dr. Han Jochen Vogel, his most valued minister and most likely successor, to the rescue.

Acceptance by the Berlin parliament put the crisis on ice for the moment.

Dr. Vogel is not only an outstanding politician but also one of the best city administrators having been a young and successful mayor of Munich. If any one can save Berlin for the SPD, he can. But if he fails not only his career but He Schmidt's prestige will suffer badly.

## Data protection challenge to UK

By Frances Gibb

A cabinet committee of ministers from the departments involved, which includes the Home Office, the Departments of Trade and Industry, and the Department of Health and Social Security, is to meet in the next two weeks to discuss the issue, but there is no certainty that legislation will be proposed.

The convention obliges signatories to bring in laws enshrining its principles and to establish appropriate sanctions and remedies "for their violation."

Mr Dudley Smith, Conservative MP for Warwick and Leamington, who is to put questions to Mr Whitelaw urging government action, said yesterday: "The signing by these countries sharpens the need for legislation."

There was a danger, he said, that Britain would become

isolated and companies would lose contracts to France or West Germany because there was no protection in Britain over the use of data. Foreign companies would be unwilling to do business.

"Apart from companies, it has become evident that data users such as the medical services and universities are keenly aware of the need for legislation and are pressing for it to secure a climate of trust between themselves and the data subject: the private citizen."

Concern was also voiced by Mr Robert Kilroy-Silk, Labour MP for Ormskirk and chairman of the Parliamentary Labour Party Civil Liberties Group. He will ask Mr Whitelaw if Britain will sign the convention and demand a statement of policy on data protection and privacy.

## Confusion over new benefits scheme

By Pat Healy  
Social Services Correspondent

First impressions of the new supplementary benefit scheme indicate that the Government has not achieved its promise of a simple system with clear and legally defined rights for payments.

In the first four weeks of the new scheme, monitoring by nine welfare agencies found

that social security staff were inadequately trained and consequently misinformed claimants.

Some staff made decisions unlawfully, by applying the new rules to claims made before they took effect, a report published today by the Child Poverty Action Group says.

The new scheme was introduced on November 24. It is not clear whether the confusion

is caused by initial unfamiliarity or if it reflects the inability of staff to cope with the complexity of the regulations.

The report recommends certain changes including telling claimants in writing which regulations are being applied. It also asks Mr Whitelaw: "The New Supplementary Benefit Scheme in Practice, (CPAG, 1 Macdon Street, London WC2B 5NH, 60p).

## GPs told to limit amount of drugs to possible suicides

By a Staff Reporter

Family doctors should limit the quantities of drugs they prescribe to patients who might try to kill themselves and put more effort into giving advice and support to them, a report published by the Royal College of General Practitioners recommends.

So-called suicide attempts, in which patients probably have no real intention of killing themselves, are responsible for one in seven of acute medical admissions to hospital, the report says.

Concern was also voiced by Mr Robert Kilroy-Silk, Labour MP for Ormskirk and chairman of the Parliamentary Labour Party Civil Liberties Group. He will ask Mr Whitelaw if Britain will sign the convention and demand a statement of policy on data protection and privacy.

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The disturbances began in Zurich last May, with demands for more local authority grants for youth culture. The troubles have since spread to other Swiss cities.—Reuter.

## Move to end church school caning

By Diana Geddes  
Education Correspondent

Corporal punishment in schools is ineffective, damaging, and incompatible with Christian educational ideals, the Church of England's London and Southwark diocesan boards of education say. They are urging church schools in their areas to phase out caning "over a limited period of time".

All inner London county schools have banned corporal punishment from today, but the prohibition cannot be made binding on the voluntary-aided church schools, which have the right to control their own

internal disciplinary procedures. According to the Society of Teachers Opposed to Physical Punishment (Stopp), one Church of England mixed comprehensive school, Bacon's in Rotherhithe, is top of London's "beating league" with 689 canings in 1976-77, the latest period for which figures are available.

All voluntary-aided Church of England schools in the London and Southwark diocese have been sent a letter from Preliminary R. H. Green, director of schools, setting out the church's views on corporal punishment.

The letter says: "It can be fairly argued that not only is corporal punishment incompatible with what a Christian should understand as educational ideals and aims, but also that it is unnecessary... ineffective... damaging, both psychologically and sometimes even physically; increasingly unacceptable throughout the civilized world and in this country... a serious breach of human rights... (and) far too wide in its permitted use..."

Corporal punishment could also encourage violence, the letter adds.



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## WEST EUROPE

## Communists plead for new union of left to defeat M Giscard

From Ian Murray Paris, Feb 1

M Georges Marchais, leader of the French Communist Party, has made it quite clear that he expects government posts to be given to his party should the Socialists win the presidential elections.

Speaking in Bordeaux yesterday and on Friday evening, he said that Communist ministers were essential if there was to be a real and dynamic change in the way France was run.

In Bordeaux he made a long and detailed attack on the policies of President Giscard d'Estaing during his term in office. "As far as I am concerned, everything is clear," he said. "I want, along with my party, to create the conditions in which to beat Giscard d'Estaing."

To do this he called for "the union of all the popular forces, the union of the left for change". Rediscovery of the phrase "union of the left" by M. Marchais after his many bitter attacks against the Socialist Party over the past three years, shows how far he has come down the path of reconciliation as the elections loom.

Nevertheless he is still

strongly critical of M François Mitterrand, the Socialist candidate. In his Paris speech he was particularly scathing of the way in which he believed Mitterrand was seeking to avoid a commitment to create Communist ministers. If the Socialist candidate pretended to talk of change without mentioning the Communists, he was making a mockery of the idea, he said.

M. Marchais, while never having abandoned the idea of the union of the left in his public utterances, has until recently refused to accept that the Socialist Party leaders could ever bring about the kind of changes wanted by the Communists. Now he seems to be helping from their Communist friends they could still create the conditions for change.

M. Marchais is the president of the Republican Party and a close adviser of President Giscard d'Estaing, has sarcastically sent a copy of the French constitution to the Socialist Party to remind its members that the Communist Party was opposed to it.

M. Mitterrand, who is away in China, has not yet responded to the latest taunts aimed at him.

## Dramatic journey for Spanish King

## Delay over choice of Suárez successor

From Richard Wigg Madrid, Feb 1

Large posters in Madrid streets are advertising a new book on King Juan Carlos, who later this week undertakes one of the most dramatic journeys of his reign—a visit to the troubled Basque region.

Emilio "Ever" Inch a King" the book charts the first five years of his reign and the transition to democracy executed by the man whom the King chose so successfully for the task. Señor Adolfo Suárez, who suddenly resigned office on Thursday.

The King spent the weekend in consultations with parliamentary leaders trying to fulfil probably the most crucial political function that the democratic constitution accords him—selecting a candidate for the prime minister. The royal choice, when made, requires parliamentary approval.

The serious, continuing divisions within the biggest party, the Centre Democratic Union (UCD), will make the King's task of choosing a new Prime Minister all the more difficult. Because of these divisions, the King is not expected to nominate any politician before he goes to the Basque region on Tuesday. Despite the security risks, he will be accompanied by Queen Sophia and possibly Prince Felipe on the tour.

A second round of consultations may come when the King returns, but King Juan Carlos has many well-wishers for the outcome of the UCD party conference, which will be held in Palma Majorca next weekend, before naming his choice.

Señor Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo, the Deputy Prime Minister in charge of economic affairs, is still the most likely successor to Señor Suárez.

Señor Calvo Sotelo had consultations this weekend with both his supporters in the party and with leaders from the Christian Democrat and liberal parliamentary wings who had not been consulted by Señor Suárez over the succession.

An opinion poll published by *El País* yesterday showed Señor Calvo Sotelo coming far behind Señor Felipe González, the Opposition leader, as the man in the street's choice for the next Prime Minister—7.8 per cent compared with the Socialist leader's 50 per cent.

Right-wing members of the broad UCD alliance are saying that they will try to negotiate the best deal they can with Señor Calvo Sotelo over the new Government's formation and programme. The right-wing fears that Señor Suárez may be tempted to make a political comeback, perhaps as party president, at next weekend's conference.

One of the main issues facing the UCD is the divorce question. A bill to permit divorce in Spain—for the first time since the Civil War—is due to go through Parliament this coming session.

Señor Francisco Fernández, the Justice Minister, who comes from the party's social-democratic wing, indicated today that he wanted to remain in his post and not be given the foreign affairs portfolio.

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## OVERSEAS

## Bani-Sadr criticism of clergy increases

From Tony Allaway Tehran, Feb 1

President Bani-Sadr of Iran this weekend launched a new phase in his unceasing war of words with the country's ruling powers.

In a speech in the southern town of Jiroft the President openly called for public support against the religious fundamentalists controlling the political apparatus, accusing his foes of "oppression and despotism".

In a newspaper interview published today he also accused the Parliament of attempting to eliminate every trace of the President from national life.

The President's new verbal onslaught coincides with the so far unconfirmed reports from political sources that Mr Bani-Sadr has spurned attempts at compromise with his declared enemies in the powerful Islamic Republican Party (IRP). Instead, the sources said the President is attempting to gather the support of as many other political groups as he can in his battle against the IRP.

The sources suggest that one reason for the President's latest onslaught might be elections expected to take place in the near future for some of the remaining parliamentary seats not decided in last spring's elections.

Certainly he was at his most outspoken in his speech in Jiroft which was reported by some of the Iranian press today including, surprisingly, the official Paris news agency.

"I will resist tendencies towards oppression, towards pressure, towards prison and towards torture," he told a crowd of thousands gathered in the town, where he had gone to examine the plight of war refugees resettled there.

He also said that the IRP-dominated Majlis (parliament) "has had no other purpose



A supporter of Ayatollah Khomeini who says she is willing to die for him.

"I call on the nation for support and assure you that such steadfastness will pave the way to a happy future."

The President told the people to fear nothing "if you do not want to be ruled by those who want to bring back the bad days of the past through lies, trickery, calumny, libel, prison and torture."

In an interview with the newspaper *Islamic Revolution* published today the President also declared that the IRP-dominated Majlis (parliament) "has had no other purpose

except to eliminate the President... Wherever they see a trace of the President they try to eliminate it... The problem is that the constitution has not been implemented from the beginning... the admission of some of his aides that the recent Iranian counter-offensive had come to virtually nothing, the President said Iran was now in the process of launching a "third phase" of its struggle with Iran. He did not specify what this involved beyond saying it meant using "the full

employment of resources we have for crushing the enemy". Diplomatic break: Iran has broken diplomatic relations with Jordan and Morocco, the state radio announced (Reuters wire from Tehran). It said that the break had been approved at a four-hour Cabinet meeting by an overwhelming majority.

Mr Behzad Nabavi, Executive Affairs Minister, told the radio the move was made "because of the two countries' full support for the Iraqi regime and their enmity to the Islamic revolution of Iran".

## Canadian MP disputes Trudeau version of Thatcher promise

From John Best Ottawa, Feb 1

The exact nature of the pledge that Mr Thatcher gave last summer to Mr Trudeau, the Canadian Prime Minister, on his plans for constitutional reform, is expected to arouse heated discussion in the Canadian House of Commons this week.

Mr Jake Epp, a Conservative Opposition critic, said this weekend that he has written information that Mr Trudeau has not told the full story "about his discussions in Downing Street on June 25 last."

Mr Trudeau has said repeatedly that the British Prime Minister promised to put on a three-line whip to push legislation through the British House to amend the British North America (BNA) Act in accordance with a request from Canada's Parliament.

Mr Thatcher has never confirmed or denied the Canadian Prime Minister's version of the discussion. Meanwhile the question of the BNA Act has become explosive because of confusion and doubt over whether Mr Thatcher was made fully aware of what she was being asked to commit herself to.

Specifically, it is not at all clear that she knew the Westminster would be asked to enact a Canadian charter of rights

before surrendering control over the BNA Act, still the basis of Canada's constitution.

The right charter has become the most highly contentious part of the Canadian "patriation" resolution, which is opposed by eight of Canada's 10 provinces.

It is also unclear whether Mr Trudeau advised Mrs Thatcher that the British Government might be prepared to accept provincial opposition to the federal measure. At a press conference here on Friday, the Prime Minister said, he was "quite possible" the federal Government would justify its position by the support of the provinces.

When he emerged from his June meeting with Mrs Thatcher, however, Mr Trudeau told reporters that the "hypothesis" of provincial opposition had not come up.

Asked by a reporter on Friday to explain the apparent contradiction Mr Trudeau replied: "Well, you really have, me there... If I said it, it must have been with tongue in cheek, and I honestly would want to see the transcript of that, if there is any."

Mr Epp, the principal Tory constitutional critic, said his information indicated that Mr Trudeau "has not given Canadians the full import of his discussion with Mrs Thatcher". He intended to question the

Prime Minister about the matter in the Commons tomorrow.

The federal constitutional plan to deal with a potentially crippling blow last week with the report of a British parliamentary committee which suggested that Westminster should not pass it in its present form and with so many provinces—

all but Ontario and New Brunswick—arrayed against it. At his press conference, an extraordinary affair, Mr Trudeau said the committee, headed by Sir Anthony Kershaw, and the British Parliament "have not been deciding what is good for Canada". "Interference by Britain," he said.

At another point he remarked that it would be funny for Britain to demand in the Commonwealth "and to have refused to give complete and final independence to one of its former colonies when that has been requested".

The British might find it difficult to justify its position when Commonwealth heads of government met in Melbourne this autumn.

"If they (the British) are wise," he added, "they will get it through quickly and hold their nose while they are doing it and send it over."

## Iraq takes delivery of French jets

From Ian Murray Paris, Feb 1

France has delivered, on time, the first four Mirage F1 fighters to Iraq out of a total order for 60. The aircraft, which were ordered in 1977, were handed over to Iraqi pilots in Cyprus yesterday.

In a statement today the Iranian Embassy in Paris said: "The Iranian people will never forget this act by the French Government."

According to a statement from the French Foreign Ministry, the Government had always made it clear that it would execute the orders laid down at the time they were placed.

Iraq, which has become France's second largest oil supplier, is also one of its best customers for arms. Apart from the Mirage fighters, Iraq has been supplied with a number of ships including corvettes, fast launches and coastal batteries.

The Iraqi Army is already equipped with 100 AMX 30 heavy tanks, 50 light tanks as well as 40 Puma helicopters and 60 Gazelle 342 anti-tank helicopters. Other French equipment in service includes a range of missiles and anti-tank weapons.

The start of the Gulf war France had not delivered any military equipment to Iraq. The Mirages appear to have been regarded as a special case since they were ordered well before the start of the war and presumably have been paid for.

The four jets were flown to Cyprus and handed over to Iraqi pilots who had arrived three days earlier on board a Jordanian flight. The Cyprus Government initially said that it believed the aircraft had been delivered to Jordan.

## Peru ends decree law as troops take border post

Lima, Feb 1. (AFP)—President Fernando Belaúnde Terry of Peru announced here late today that a proclamation of a state of emergency had been lifted after the "victory" of his country's troops in border clashes with Ecuador.

He cancelled the emergency decree after it was learnt that an outpost at Paquisha, which had been occupied by Ecuador, had been retaken by Peruvian troops.

Earlier President Belaúnde had said that his country would accept a ceasefire in its border conflict with Ecuador as soon as Peru had captured the final outpost occupied by Ecuador on Peruvian territory. Agency France-Press and AP.

## Black African leaders denounce commando attack on Mozambique

From Nicholas Ashford Johannesburg, Feb 1

One of the two South African soldiers killed during the commando raids on African National Congress (ANC) hideouts in Maputo last Friday was of British origin. It has been revealed here. He was Sergeant Robert Hutchinson, whose parents live in Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire.

The other dead South African was named as Sergeant Ian Sutill.

Altogether 14 people were killed during the South African attack on three houses in the Maputo suburb of Matola during the early hours of Friday morning. They included 11 occupants of the ANC houses, the two South African soldiers and a Portuguese civilian who was caught in the crossfire while driving to work. One of the ANC dead is reported to be Mr William Khanyile, a former Robben Island prisoner and a one-time senior member of the South African Congress of Trade Unions.

The first of its kind by South Africa against a target in Mozambique, has received widespread condemnation in neighbouring states as it is seen as a signal that South Africa may be embarking on an aggressive new policy in dealing with the ANC.

Lieutenant-General Armando Guebuza, Mozambique's Deputy Defence Minister, said the attack was "a foul and criminal act". He told a Frelimo party conference that it was a challenge to Mozambique's right to shelter South African citizens "being persecuted by the apartheid regime".

In Salisbury, Mr Robert Mugabe, the Prime Minister, said in a message to President Samora Machel of Mozambique that "these wanton acts of murder and aggression by the brazen gangs of the Pretoria regime" would not deter Africa from assisting the people of South Africa and Namibia to attain their freedom.

The raid was also condemned by Chief Gatscha Buthelesi, the Chief Minister of Kwazulu and president of the Inkatha movement, the largest black organisation in South Africa. Addressing an Inkatha rally in Soweto he said that such actions would only drive more South African blacks into violent opposition against the Government.

blacks into violent opposition against the Government. However, the two main white opposition parties in South Africa have both supported the raid. Mr Harry Schwarz, defence spokesman for the opposition Progressive Federal Party, said that terrorists should be hit wherever they were. He added, however, that caution should be expected not to disturb the peaceful border between South Africa and Mozambique.

Meanwhile, South Africa has denied claims by the Mozambican authorities—and supported by diplomats who visited the scene of the raid—that some of the dead ANC members had had their ears cut off—a practice that became widespread during the war in Rhodesia. The allegations were "ridiculous and scandalous propaganda", a spokesman said.

Last night, the Defence Ministry put on display a consignment of Russian arms and ammunition to show, it was said, that the raid had been against an ANC headquarters and not against refugee homes as had been claimed by Mozambique.

The weapons included small arms, rockets, mortars and limpet mines similar to those used during last year's ANC attack against the Sasol oil-from-coal plant.

Attack denounced: The African National Congress today condemned the South African raid as "a criminal act of banditry" (Reuters writes from Lusaka).

A statement signed by Mr Alfred Nzo, ANC's Secretary-General, and issued in Lusaka said the attack was "a continuation of the apartheid policy of the apartheid regime" which had resulted in the deaths of hundreds of people in Mozambique, Zambia and Angola, as well as South Africa.

"This policy of mass murder once more confirms the criminal nature of the apartheid regime whose continued existence constitutes a challenge both to our people and the rest of democratic and peace-loving mankind," the statement said. It added that the violation of Mozambique's territory "is part of a policy which is aimed at destabilizing the independent states of our region and overthrowing the legitimate governments of these countries."

## Western companies accused by MPs of breaking oil embargo on Pretoria

From Michael Hornsby Brussels, Feb 1

European and American companies were accused here this weekend of playing a key role in helping South Africa to maintain its imports of crude oil despite the embargo operated by the main oil exporting countries.

A declaration issued by more than 40 MPs from 11 European countries said there was "alarming evidence" that Western companies were "purchasing oil from those countries including those that embargo South Africa, and then secretly taking it directly or indirectly to South Africa."

The accusation was levelled at the end of a two-day conference of West European parliamentarians on an oil embargo against South Africa, organised by the United Nations special committee against apartheid.

The parliamentarians called on the United Nations Security Council to impose a mandatory oil embargo against South Africa, which has no indigenous crude oil resources, in line with resolutions passed by an overwhelming majority of the General Assembly.

The General Assembly voted in 1979, and again in 1980, for an oil embargo, but the seven countries which voted against included Britain, France and the United States. Permanent members of the Security Council, all three have the power of veto.

Outlining the conclusions of the conference for journalists, Mr Laurens Brinkhorst, a Dutch opposition politician belonging to the left-of-centre Democrats 66 group, described an oil embargo as "one of the last peaceful means of putting an end to apartheid."

South Africa has built up large strategic stockpiles of crude oil, kept mainly in disused coal mines in the Transvaal, and can meet around 20 per cent of its oil needs from its oil-from-coal plants. But studies done for the United Nations suggest that a totally effective oil embargo could bring the South African economy to a grinding halt within two-and-a-half years.

The parliamentarians' accusations against Western oil and shipping companies were

strongly supported by a still confidential analysis of the sources of South Africa's crude oil imports which is to be published later this year by the Amsterdam-based Shipping Research Bureau.

Since the beginning of 1979, when the new Iranian Government (previously the source of 90 per cent of South Africa's crude) cut off supplies, all Arab and African oil exporting countries have operated an embargo, and no government admits to supplying the South Africans.

The one exception is Brunei, which is known to supply about 8 per cent of South Africa's needs. Despite the embargo, and the disclaimers of governments and companies, the West, South Africa is still able to import an estimated 300,000 barrels of crude oil a day. It is clear that most of this is embargoed oil, and it appears that one international company—Shell—is deeply involved in this trade.

In the absence of official statistics, the Amsterdam research bureau has made a close study of the movements of the world's tanker fleet, and identified a total of 150 tankers which called at either Cape Town or Durban during the 15 months from the beginning of 1979 to the end of March 1980.

The study accepts that a fair number of these may have been calling simply for repair, bunker fuel or other supplies. But it has identified 23 super-tankers with a capacity of 200,000 tons, which it considers almost certain to have delivered oil.

Of these 23, which on their own could have met 25 per cent of South Africa's oil needs during the period in question, 15 sailed to Cape Town or Durban from the Persian Gulf, which embargo oil to South Africa, and 12 were owned or chartered by Shell. Seven were owned and managed by Norwegian companies.

It is clear, then, that some countries which officially embargo oil sales to South Africa are secretly conniving at this trade. But the study considers that most of the crude is being shipped to the South Africans without the knowledge of the supplier country.

## Russians know they must foot the bill

Continued from page 1

attempts to undermine from within the power of the workers, their unity, moral spirit and loyalty to class interests.

It said the Government had repeatedly stated its readiness to solve problems around the negotiating table, but "this was clearly not to the liking of Solidarity leaders who were following a path of confrontation and aggression in the country's economic and political affairs."

Reflecting the deep concern of the Soviet leadership—and indeed of most Russians—that the Polish crisis will probably have to be paid for from the pockets of Soviet workers, *Izvestia* spoke of an "escalation of tension and deepening of chaos" in the economy, which was a return to a normal rhythm of life.

All this was costing billions of zlotys, thousands of tons of uncast steel and unmined coal and tens of thousands of pairs of unmade shoes, *Izvestia* said.

Echoing similar ominous assertions in December, denied at the time by the Polish leadership, *Izvestia* reported that workers were being intimidated by some brigades of Solidarity to ensure cooperation in strikes.

The report is the toughest attack yet on the union and the most gloomy picture yet given to the Russians of the situation in Poland. It is still both by Russians and by western observers here as a sign that Moscow has reached the limits of tolerance.

Though there is no suggestion that the Russians are now ready to blame Mr Stanislaw Kania, the party leader, who still appears to enjoy the Kremlin's confidence, it is clear that they are expecting the Polish authorities to take, fairly swiftly, more decisive action.

## Arab teachers prosecuted over West Bank strike

From Our Correspondent Tel Aviv, Feb 1

Twelve Palestinian Arabs representing about 7,200 West Bank teachers, who have been striking for higher pay, were arrested yesterday by the military government and will be prosecuted under a Jordanian regulation prohibiting strikes by civil servants.

Arab sources said the prisoners were members of the General Committee for Teachers in the West Bank. Military government sources said 40 other members detained but released yesterday may also be prosecuted.

The Arab sources said the strike began 45 days ago and affected 227,000 pupils in primary, preparatory and high school. They said the strike was "purely professional" and not a political statement, and that the teachers were not demanding a military government source said the strikers had been offered substantial increases.

The staff officer for education published warnings that the strike was illegal. The authorities cracked down when a three-week vacation ended and the teachers failed to return to work.

Labour pledges: Mr Shimon Peres, the Israeli Opposition leader, said today that if he were elected prime minister, he would "definitely not be obliged to follow the policies of Mr Menachem Begin—particularly regarding Jewish settlements on occupied Arab lands" (UPI writes from Tel Aviv).

But Mr Peres said Israel was united regardless of political preference on the issue of Jerusalem. He called for the construction of 50,000 apartments to strengthen the Jewish population in the United States capital of Israel. He did not elaborate where the housing would be built.

Addressing delegates of his Labour Party, Mr Peres said under his rule, Israel would honour all its international treaties, such as its peace treaty with Egypt. But domestic policies were another matter, and settlements fell into this category, just as did economic policy.

Labour's optimism about the elections in the summer is reflected in public opinion polls. In a poll published last Friday in the newspaper *Masruv* Mr Begin's Likud grouping slipped another 2 points to 14 per cent, and Labour's standing rose 2 per cent to 44 per cent.

## Community industry and budget changes proposed

By David Wood

Two pamphlets are published today by Conservative members of the European Parliament proposing reforms within the European Community, perhaps partly with an eye on Britain's presidency of the Council of Ministers from July to December.

Mr Robert Jackson, MEP for Upper Thames, goes beyond reform of the common agricultural policy to the promotion of new spending policies. He argues that Britain can prove its case for budgetary fairness only by supporting budgetary convergence "designed deliberately to bring about resource transfers from richer to poorer regions".

Inherent in his logic is the British membership of the European monetary system. He is against further special arbitrary arrangements of the kind made

by the EEC under pressure from Mrs Thatcher last year.

Sir David Nicholson, MEP for London Centre, has led a leading party of European Democrats who report on developing a Community industrial policy. They argue for an industrial development fund within the European budget, alongside the regional and social funds, and propose that the Council of Ministers should include an industrial council and that there should be an industrial committee created in the European Parliament.

مكتبة الأصم



## OVERSEAS

## Prisoners of conscience

Taiwan:  
Li Ching-sun

By Caroline Moorehead

Li Ching-sun, a former deputy director of the state-owned national radio and chairman of the executive council of the Great China Evening News, is serving a 15-year sentence in a prison off the south-eastern coast of Taiwan.

At his military court trial under martial law legislation in December, 1971, he was charged with sedition.

Li Ching-sun—also known as Li Johnson—spent a period of his journalistic career as editor of the *Central Daily News*, the ruling party of Taiwan. He is believed to have been a long-standing party member.

After his arrest in November, 1970, Li Ching-sun was accused of belonging to the Chinese Communist Party, passing government secrets to the Chinese Communists and attempting to foment a revolt in Taiwan.

None of these charges, however, referred to anything taking place after 1949, when the Kuomintang Government left mainland China for Taiwan. Li Ching-sun himself was born on the mainland and moved to Taiwan that year.

According to recent information, Li Ching-sun suffers from diabetes and low blood pressure. Since his trial he has said that he confessed to the charges against him only under duress.

The true reason for his imprisonment, it would seem, is that he had in the past written articles criticizing the Government for inefficiency and corruption.

## Malaysia frees writer

From Our Correspondent

Kuala Lumpur, Feb 1

The Malaysian Government has announced the release from detention of Mr Samad Ismail, a journalist and writer, after holding him without trial for nearly five years.

Sources said he would be freed after a statement by him is broadcast tomorrow.

Mr Samad, whose literary works had earned him a secure niche in Malay literature, was detained in June 1976 for his alleged communist activities.

He was a close confidant of Tun Abdul Razak, a former Prime Minister, who died in

## Peking to stop backing Asean communist insurgent movements

From David Watts

Bangkok, Feb 1

Mr Zhao Ziyang, the Chinese Prime Minister, today indicated important developments after two sessions of "very fruitful" talks with General Prem Tinsulanonda, his Thai counterpart.

At a press conference, Mr Zhao hinted that there had been progress towards the unification of resistance movements fighting the Vietnamese in Kampuchea and said that China was ending its material support to communist insurgent movements in the countries of South-East Asia.

The Chinese and the Thais have for some time been pressing for the unification of the military arm of the Government of Democratic Kampuchea, the Khmer Rouge and the Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF), the leading non-communist resistance group.

The Chinese have said that there would be no substantial support for the KPNLF, headed by Mr Son Sann, a former Prime Minister of Kampuchea, until there was cooperation between this group and the Khmer Rouge.

Mr Son Sann has consistently rejected the idea of union between the two groups, though he favours occasional military cooperation.

"I am optimistic about the unification of all patriotic resistance forces in Kampuchea," Mr Zhao remarked, indicating that there had been progress over the Chinese plans for a unified military front against the Vietnamese in Kampuchea.

This is a principal element of China's Kampuchea policy in line with the countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (Asean). Both the Chinese and Asean want either Mr Son Sann or Prince Norodom Sihanouk to lead the unified movement, to give its respectability, while harnessing the military strength of the Khmer Rouge—the only credible military opponents of the Vietnamese—to the joint effort.

One Chinese source said that Prince Sihanouk "was being stubborn" but the prince did indicate, in a recent letter to a Hongkong-based magazine, that he would be willing to lead his people militarily against the Vietnamese.

The Khmer Rouge has said that its leaders would be willing to stand aside for any new leader able and willing to fight for the rejection of the Vietnamese.

On the question of Chinese-supported insurgency movements in Thailand and Malaysia, Mr Zhao said the Chinese were opposed to any interference in the internal affairs of other countries. The relationship between the Communist Party of China and the communist parties of the Asean countries was "a moral and political relationship. We maintain some relations with the communist parties in these countries but they will not obstruct the development of the relationship between China and the Asean countries."

Mr Zhao went on to say that relations with the Asean were now good and Peking would continue to strengthen them. "We sincerely hope that the Asean countries will unite all patriotic forces in their countries," he added.

Chinese sources said that Mr Zhao's remarks indicated that there was now no military support for the insurgency movements in Thailand and Malaysia and that China wanted the Communists in those countries to be allowed to take part in normal political processes.

Throughout his Bangkok visit the Chinese leader emphasized Chinese support for Thailand, and for Asean's call for an international conference on Kampuchea.

Mr Zhao said that if there was a further incursion by the Vietnamese into Thailand "the Government and people of China would stand firmly beside the people of Thailand and find some means of coming to their aid."

## Widespread unrest reported in China

From David Lan

Agence France-Presse

Hongkong, Feb 1

Recent reports from China have revealed signs of widespread unrest which, if unchecked, could lead to political instability, disrupting the country's modernization programme.

An analysis of the Chinese media shows that the unrest has taken several forms including publications, demonstrations, occasional explosions and even agitation for another cultural revolution.

Among those involved are intellectuals who have been sent to the countryside or have returned from there to the cities, remnant followers of the disgraced Gang of Four, and various minorities.

The areas affected, as mentioned in the reports, include Xinjiang in the west, Tibet and Yunnan in the south-west, Shanghai in the east and Jilin in the north-east.

The party theoretical journal, *Red Flag*, yesterday stated: "In our society, there is still class struggle and factors of instability, so we must not let up on our vigilance."

Describing the recent Peking trial of the Gang of Four and their associates as "a victory of the legal system," the journal called for the use of the law to attack "all enemies sabotaging stability and to firmly shatter remnant forces of the Lin Biao-Jiang Qing cliques."

The *Peking Daily* said yesterday: "A pessimistic wave of sabotage, protests and despair has been sweeping the country." If unchecked, "it is bound to ruin our hard-earned political stability."

A Shanghai paper reported last week that remnant followers of the Gang of Four were running illegal cells and publications under the cover of "democracy." Some of them hoped to use methods of the Cultural Revolution and stage a second revolution.

The *Liberation Daily* of Shanghai said: "There still exist factors of instability and they keep rising."

These are just a few of a series of articles speaking of the dangers to China's stability, against a background of unusual events across the country.

Most noticeable among these has been the movements of Mr Wang Zhen, a Politburo member who recently visited Shanghai and is now reported in Xinjiang, both of them places shimmering with unrest.

Reliable sources were quoted as saying that about 10,000 students had recently demonstrated in the centre of Shanghai, demanding legalization of their status.

## Briton's body is found in hotel basement

Johore Baru, Malaysia, Feb 1

Malaysian police said today that the body of a British architect had been found in a septic tank in a Johore Baru hotel.

The 36-year-old play was suspected in the death of David Hurst, aged 32, from Wimbledon, London.

A plumber found the body while checking a pump in the hotel's basement. Police said Mr Hurst was checked into the hotel on January 19 and was reported missing five days later.

—Reuter.

## Hongkong doubts unallayed over nationality law

From Our Correspondent

Hongkong, Feb 1

The British Government's assurance that the British Nationality Bill is not designed to weaken the links between Britain and Hongkong has not allayed doubts among expatriates and resident Chinese in the crown colony.

There was immediate popular and official support for the recommendation by Sir Paul Bryan, the chairman of the all-party Anglo-Hongkong group of MPs, that the passports of Hongkong citizens should carry the words "British (Hongkong) citizen" and that the passports of inhabitants of the other dependent territories should similarly have the name of the country inserted.

Commentaries in the Hongkong United States claimed that the new legislation sought to make Hongkong residents "second-class citizens."

There is strong belief that Britain is steadily discarding the ties with the colony.

Summing up this public opinion, a leading article in *The Express*, the leading Chinese-language daily, said: "Although it is generally acknowledged that a close link between Hongkong and Britain is of mutual advantage, Whitehall's weak links between Britain and Hongkong has not allayed doubts among expatriates and resident Chinese in the crown colony."

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## British minister in cordial talks with Dr Obote

From Our Correspondent

Nairobi, Feb 1

Mr Richard Luce, Parliamentary Under-Secretary at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, met President Milton Obote, in Entebbe yesterday and discussed relations between Britain and Uganda in the light of the December elections which brought Dr Obote to power.

The talks were described as cordial. The Ugandans have asked for more British aid, including military assistance to train the newly-recruited Ugandan Army, as well as a wide range of development and technical aid.

Mr Shafiq Arain, the newly-appointed Ugandan High Commissioner in London and the only Asian in Dr Obote's Cabinet, attended the talks.

The President and Mrs Obote later gave a lunch in honour of Mr Luce, which was also attended by Mr William Billings, the British High Commissioner, and by Sir David and Lady Scott.

Sir David, who was High Commissioner in Uganda from 1966 to 1969, has now retired from the diplomatic service and is visiting Uganda on behalf of Mitchell Cotts, the firm that owns large tea estates there, and of Barclays Bank.

Sir David has been renewing acquaintances with Dr Obote, who was in office when he served in Uganda.

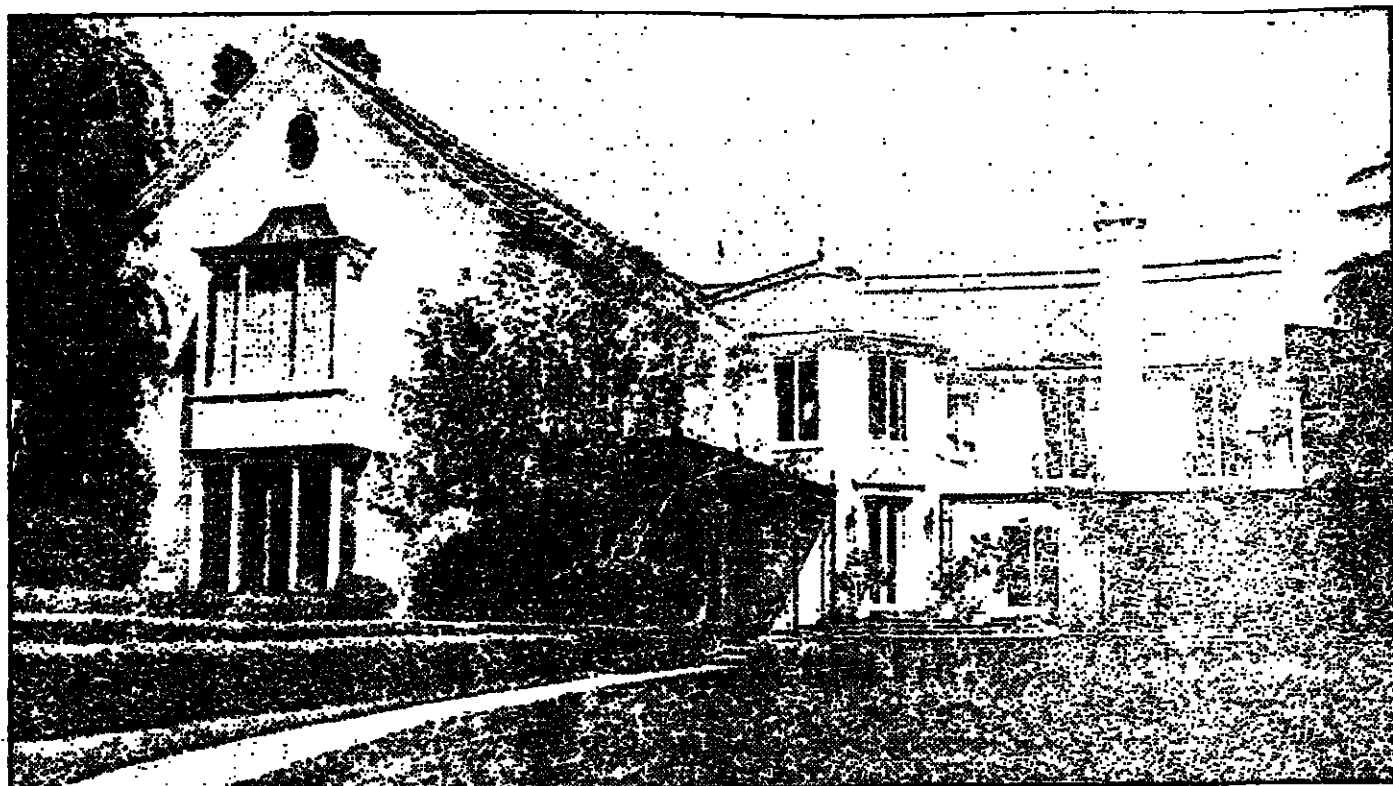
More famine is threatened in north-west Uganda, where an estimated 250,000 people fled from their homes in October after remnants of the Amin army invaded from neighbouring Zaïre and Sudan. Considerable damage was caused to Arua, the main town of the West Nile district and homes and farms were looted over a wide area.

Many people fled into Zaïre and Sudan and have now returned, to face starvation because the harvest has been lost. United Nations officials who visited the area last week say substantial food aid is needed urgently.

On its part, the Uganda Government is trying to restore services in the West Nile and some of these have reopened in Arua, which until recently was almost deserted.

## People

## The treasures of Pickfair go on the auction block



Pickfair, the Hollywood home of Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks Sr.

"I gently admonish all loved ones and friends that there is no 'pick-fair' in America's Sweetheart," declared America's Sweetheart Mary Pickford in her voluminous will. By the time she died in 1979 at the age of 86 there were few left to weep but many, it seems, to squabble over the spoils.

When the treasures of Pickfair, second only to the White House at one time as the most famous residence in America, go on sale on February 19 at the James Goodman Gallery in Glendale, California, there will be no sign of the complicated negotiations that have gone on since her death over the considerable assets she left behind.

In fact, it will be almost as fascinating an exercise to examine what will not be on the auction block as to see what will be there. For since her death there has been intrigue and infighting worthy of a Venetian court.

In her will the silent star, whose marriage to Douglas Fairbanks, sr, made them the most glamorous couple in the land, decreed that the proceeds of the sale of the 22 room converted hunting lodge, where everyone from Albert Einstein to European royalty, from mobster Bugsy Siegel to Charlie Chaplin were entertained, should go to the non-profit Mary Pickford Foundation.

The house was recently bought for \$5.4m (£2.2m) but for the past year lawyers for Miss Pickford's husband of 41 years, former handiworker and actor Buddy Rogers, have been negotiating with executors of the estate over what Mr Rogers, who is also a trustee, is entitled to claim from the house under the terms of the will, which stated he should receive "such household furnishings as he may designate as necessary to properly furnish his home."

Trustees said they expected a modest house to be furnished—not the 7,500 square foot lodge that Mr Rogers has been building on land adjoining Pickfair.

Finally the court awarded Rogers \$1m in cash as his share in helping his wife sell some of her assets—her interest in United Artists, the studio she founded with Fairbanks, D. W. Griffith and Chaplin in the twenties—as well as half of Pickfair's furnishings.

While all this was going on appraisers reported that one day two moving men arrived to remove pieces of furniture and when questioned said they were working for Mrs Rogers.

"But she's dead," an appraiser noted, later discovering that the "Mrs Rogers" referred to was a long time friend of Buddy Rogers.

Other precious items—including pieces from Pickfair's exquisite jade collection—were believed stolen and a valuable box load of six decorative guns given by



Buddy Rogers beside a portrait of his wife Mary Pickford as Betsy Ross, the seamstress of the first American flag.

Rudolf Valentino to Douglas Fairbanks, and willed to the Smithsonian Institute were sent from the house—but vanished on the way.

Miss Pickford's star sapphire, however, was personally picked up by a representative of the Washington museum. Mr Rogers acquired the 100 piece Napoleon Josephine china dinner service—willed to him—the ten paintings and the famous Rodin drawings. Over the years there have been rumours about the authenticity of the artwork and executor Sull Lawrence notes, "We too doubt that the Remingtons are the genuine article and we believe the Rodins to be copies and of no great value."

Appraisers uncovered Miss Pickford's "Honeymoon box"—containing her wedding dress, a kimono monogrammed "RF" and a brown teddy bear and an even more poignant were letters from Miss Pickford

to Fairbanks pleading with him not to divorce her and besmirch their image as America's perfect couple. Fairbanks did, however, in 1935 to marry Lady Sylvia Ashley.

Among the items to be offered are two solid gold Cartier monogrammed vanity sets, old Chinese silks, oil paintings of the actress, Fairbanks costumes from the *Mark of Zorro*, silver from Tiffany's, her film costumes, and photographs inscribed from all the Hollywood greats including a pre-mustache Clark Gable, and her flapper style wedding dress.

There are still some 165 boxes from the estate crammed with articles which are being sifted through and as Mr Goodman the auctioneer, says, "This is the ultimate Hollywood house and I believe people will be buying as much for memory and legend as for investment."

Ivor Davis

## Can the Taj Mahal be saved from ruin by pollution?

Count Keyserling in his *Travel Diary of a Philosopher* wrote that the Taj Mahal was "one of the greatest works of art, it is perhaps the greatest of all pieces of artifice which the spirit of man has ever achieved." He also spoke of the "exquisite quality" of the marble monument.

Since Keyserling wrote these lines in 1914 the Taj has become the victim of the mindless drift to industrial growth. In the once imperial capital of the Moghuls, Agra, two thermal power houses belch smoke emitting nine tons of pollutants each day into the atmosphere. For 30 years a north-westerly wind has wafted the pollutants to the side of the Taj nearest the Jumuna river. As if this was not punishment enough, indiscriminate licensing of foundries has resulted in 250 of them coming up, adding their quota of about four tons of pollutants a day. Not to be left behind, the shunting yard of the Indian railways utilized steam engines adding their share of one and a half tons of pollutants.

The greatest damage has been inflicted at the lower end of the Taj dome facing the river. Elsewhere too the pollutants have lodged in the moisture trapped between marbles and these have released an acidic reaction that has resulted in discolouring of some of the marble to grey and brownish tints. Semi-precious stones, black, yellow, red as well as pink agate which adorn significant portions of the Taj have suffered from eruptions resembling the oozing of eczema on human skin. While marble has a strong grained surface, it can still be pitted.

Apart from the main structure of the Taj, there are the surrounding monuments that make up the Taj complex, its exterior gate and its flanking buildings also beautifully architected in red sandstone. The sandstone is flaking. Speaking of the main monument, Somnath Chib, India's former Director-General of Tourism, says that "In 50 years the Taj could look black". Another environmentalist, Professor T. Shivaji Rao, warns in 50 years the monument could crumble unless action is taken. The Taj no longer gleams in the sun but a good part of the white marble is still clear and can be saved by prompt action. Fortunately the government has moved albert late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi personally rang the Chairman of the Railway Board and ordered that steam engines used for shunting be replaced by diesel.

From September 12 this has been done. For the other two main pollutants, the Prime Minister has depended on action by the state government of Uttar Pradesh. (UP) India's largest and slowest-moving state. Its chief minister elected last June, pleads privately that he has hardly had time since assuming office to attend to the Taj, because he is hovering between floods and other pressing law and order problems in the state. Now his own position as chief minister is shaky and will need more than goodwill on Mrs Gandhi's part to get the UP State machinery moving. She has not been slow. This writer was shown a letter from the Planning Commission to the President of the Heritage Society of India, Mr R. N. Mircha, MP. Mr Mircha was assured that New Delhi will give the State government compensation of £4m to meet the cost of shifting the power plants. Incidentally for all the

damage they cause, the two power plants generate a negligible 4 megawatts power. They need to be shut down immediately and the loss met from the national grid. The other procedure is too lengthy.

The coal-based foundries will probably prove a more difficult problem. There is an in-built reluctance in people to shift their place of work. If foundry owners do move, they seem in a mood to bargain and claim certain privileges in sale of land, which is now quite expensive. In case they fail to move within the next year, at least switch their operations from coal to natural gas from a nearby refinery due to 20 on stream by June 1981. All this needs determined action and, without prodding from New Delhi, a shift is hardly likely.

A separate Ministry of the Environment was created recently by Mrs Gandhi to take these and other matters in hand.

It is the refinery situated 45 kms from the Taj that could levy the greatest toll on this wonder of the modern world. The early objections of environmentalists and warnings of the Director-General of Archaeology were overruled in 1974. The refinery site was chosen at a central location from where north-westerly winds could bring the pollutants to the Taj. The location could have been shifted earlier but by now more than £100m sterling has been poured into the refinery, and the question of shifting the whole paraphernalia does not arise. The discharge of the refinery could be up to one ton of sulphur dioxide and other pollutants per hour.

The Heritage Society of India has proposed that all the

refinery's harmful effluents and destructive gases be channelled over 45 kms through a pipeline to a place south of the Taj in order to bypass the monument. It is a moot point whether this is possible and is a fool-proof solution. The Heritage Society has also proposed that monitoring of the pollutants let off by the refinery should be done on a continuous basis by an authority independent of the Ministry running the refinery.

Emperor Shah Jehan who had the Taj Mahal built as a tomb for his beloved wife thought of protecting the Taj from the dust of the surrounding region—the main environmental threat to its monument in those days. So he built not only a garden with trees in front of the Taj. Two years ago flood waters invaded the fields along the opposite bank to the Taj. When the waters receded, they took the top-soil with them leaving behind a staggering sight of fountains in ruins, and indicating that a complete garden was laid out as a companion to the Taj across the river.

For 20 years 20,000 men sweated to fulfil the dream of their Emperor. On a full-moon night in November I visited the Taj. Its dome looked like a giant pearl in the mist. As the eye steered under the silvery light, the Taj came alive to exert its spell. It looked like a Pontiff, all in white, and the twin-minarets on its left and right appeared like a Pontiff's arms outstretched in a benediction to those who had braved the cold to pay homage. The best homage contemporary India can pay is to move with speed to save the Taj. There is some hope that it is beginning to do so.

R. M. Lala

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THE ARTS

The Massacre at Paris Citizens' Glasgow

Ned Chaillet

The faults in *The Massacre at Paris* are almost all Christopher Marlowe's, or the fault of the original corrupter of the text, perhaps the printer who put it into type. It might be worth asking why Philip Prowse chose to revive the ragged thing in what seems to be the first British production in centuries, but Mr Prowse, as usual, answers the question through his staging. Even the minor jottings of a great playwright are worth considering and Mr Prowse seems to have considered exactly why Marlowe bothered to jot. If ever a play was written with a purpose and not inspiration, *The Massacre at Paris* would be it.

Whether Mr Prowse is right about Marlowe's purpose is arguable. The staging is nonetheless an ingenious and convincing suggestion. They are simulated Elizabethan actors who enter the stage from the stalls, the beginning of the performance, as the audience were backstage, though the warm-up exercises of potentially rude tongue-twisters belong more to the present Elizabethan age than the first.

When the theatre curtain at the back of the Citizens' stage is pulled open, the real audience for the performance is revealed as the single spectator, Queen Elizabeth I, about to witness a loyal play violent in its attack on Roman Catholicism and vehement in its support for royalty in its struggle against Rome. The bloodletting, based on the Bartholomew's Day Massacre, could flood the stage and is instead hastily, often comically, excused by a handful of actors who are forced rapidly to change their costumes.

A beautiful design by Mr Prowse flows from the top of the stage past the proscenium into the audience and the small cast in 1585, when I had trouble with the Nazis who said I was not to appear at the opera. Fortunately Felix von Krauss's post as singing teacher in Munich fell vacant, and was given to me, so that I could busy myself in 1937. Bacham wanted me to Papageno for his recording of *Die Zauberflöte*, and at the same time the Nazi Gauleiter of Berlin also commanded a performance of the same opera, and specified that I was to be the Papageno. So the Staatsoper took me back and I sang there until September 1944 when

A voice from the past in a man of today



Photograph by Harry Kerr

To a teenaged record-collector the early 1940s the name of Gerhard Hüsch was to be conjured with. He was an ideal Papageno in the complete *Zauberflöte* conducted by Beecham; when we looked for the song-cycles of Schubert and Schumann, we could only turn to the records by Hüsch and Hans Vdo Müller—and gladly we did so, for warm, refinement and noble singing. Some enterprising cousins had a volume of songs by the Finnish composer Yrjö Kilpinen, and there, too, Gerhard Hüsch was the persuasive singer.

Our elders remembered with ecstasy the performances at Covent Garden in 1930 of *Die Fledermaus*, conducted by Bruno Walter, with a starry cast led by Lotte Lehmann, Elisabeth Schumann and as Dr Falke (the title part), Hüsch. Wagnerites spoke about a *Tannhäuser* at Bayreuth, conducted by Toscanini, in which Hüsch and Herbert Janssen alternated as Wolfram.

Today Hüsch is 80 years old, a sprightly, energetic veteran, brisk walker, spirited conversationalist, enthusiast for physical fitness, and much sought after as vocal coach and teacher in London, Munich (where he lives) and his French-born wife and her mother, and shortly in Paris as well. I sought him out, not only to congratulate him on the birthday—which I formally witnessed, on behalf of his many British admirers ("good old 120", as they say in Hungary)—but to learn more about those years, as singing teacher and his reference books do not mention.

Where was he during the Second World War? He was commuting between Berlin and Munich, mostly on unheated trains in the middle of the night, during an air-raid with buildings burning in the big towns. My operatic work at the Berlin Staatsoper had been interrupted in 1935, when I had trouble with the Nazis who said I was not to appear at the opera. Fortunately Felix von Krauss's post as singing teacher in Munich fell vacant, and was given to me, so that I could busy myself in 1937. Bacham wanted me to Papageno for his recording of *Die Zauberflöte*, and at the same time the Nazi Gauleiter of Berlin also commanded a performance of the same opera, and specified that I was to be the Papageno. So the Staatsoper took me back and I sang there until September 1944 when

Goebbels shut down all theatres. Thanks to my teaching post I was not allowed to be drafted into the army.

When the war ended Hüsch had to face a demeritisation court. "Another singer was jealous of my Munich job, so he told the occupation forces I had been a prominent Nazi. It was easy for me to prove the contrary, but it took time, and I was a little disillusioned. So I accepted an invitation to sing and teach in Japan, the first European musician to work there since 1939.

"First I sang Wolfram, in German, while the rest of the cast sang in Japanese (it's a good language for singing). Then I sang Papageno, well-known as the Commendatore, wanted to appear as Leporello, so I sang Don Giovanni, again in German. My Leporello forgot his part, the new Commendatore was struck dumb with fear, and in the Cemetery Scene I had to sing all three vocal parts, but not in Japanese!

"When we came back to Germany from Japan, Mrs Hüsch persuaded me to give up singing while my voice was still good. I'm happy that I did so. I don't want people to think of Hüsch as a singer who went on singing when his voice was growing old.

Hüsch teaches singing as it was taught to him. "As a boy singer in Hanover, I often filled in at concerts; at one of them the singer I was replacing arrived after all, heard me and persuaded my father that I should study singing seriously. He took me to three teachers in Berlin: two said I would be on stage within a year, the third wanted me to study for three years before learning a role. I told my father this last teacher was money-grubbing; but that was the one my father trusted, and he was right.

"Hans Emge's father was the first *Postillon de Longueville* in *Adolphe* at the opera. He got the part because he also played the trumpeter:

more important for me, he was taught singing by an Italian from Padua. There you studied technique for three years before you learnt to sing with words. The vocal instrument must be able to do everything in vocalization before it is ready to think about words, and their place in singing.

"Today singers pay so much attention to the text, especially in the German *Lied*, that the voice as a musical instrument is placed second; then isn't singing. Also they're in such a hurry to earn big money that they take leading roles in large opera houses, and overstretch their vocal capacity, before they're ready. That's why there isn't a simple generation of good young opera singers in Germany at present.

"I was taught all this, though I had to prove it for myself by making mistakes. For my first audition I went to Berlin, where I was fortunately turned down and sent home to Hanover. There they had just filled the vacancy I was applying for, so I made my debut in Osnabrück. After a year I was engaged in Hanover where one colleague teased me about my small voice. As a result I took to forcing top notes for easy effect, and it was seven years before I was cured of that ailment and learned to relax when singing high baritone music. Only then did I get a job in Berlin.

"All the same, I kept to the roles that didn't strain my voice. The Prologue in *Pagliacci* was too risky, so I stayed with Silvio, and didn't attempt Taddeo. I refused Rigoletto (though I recorded some of the parts because I knew that would lead to Amonasso, lago and a quick vocal decline. When Siegfried Wagner booked both Janssen and me for the 1930 *Tannhäuser*, he offered me Amfortas instead, and I refused, knowing that Sachs would follow, for Wagner for me, not to speak of Wagner!

"Mozart's *Giovanni* and *Almaviva*, and *Papageno*, were my parts, and Verdi's *Luna*, and other light German parts, in *Lorzing*, for example. From the first I was singing German *Lieder*, they should come before learning a role in opera. Opera-singers who take up *Lieder* afterwards don't sound at home. The frame is smaller, the voice must come naturally, not as a shrinking of limits."

Gerhard Hüsch is so genial a companion, so full of ardour in expounding his love of music, that the firmness of his views is a surprise. What he talks about he has experienced for himself, and he is all praise for his pupils. He taught for three years at the University of Indiana during the 1970s, and has mixed memories of that ambitious supermarket training ground in a wilderness. "The pupils had talent," he admits. Were they his best? No, the Japanese, who had much natural gift for singing, an overpowering wish to master European music, which he loved and they were the hardest workers.

He is still working on a new scheme for training singers in Germany, and expanding his catchment in London and Paris. It was difficult to make him talk about his past as a singer; his abundant vitality is completely focused on today and, much more important, tomorrow. Happy birthday, dear Gerhard Hüsch—I mean your ninetieth, not only today's celebration.

William Mann

Books Words of the wise

Set a lexicographer to catch a lexicographer, for he knows his little ways, his difficulties, and his professional tricks of the trade. Robert Burchfield, chief editor of the Oxford dictionaries, has been doing fruitfully into the lexicographical idiosyncrasy of his great predecessor, Dictionary Johnson. He told a recent meeting of the Johnson Society about it.

Dictionary makers may seem impersonal. In fact, inevitably they conceal personal experience, direct observation, and subjective choices. Dr Burchfield's work discovers Johnson's attitudes to slavery, to brewing terms, and to quotations from his own work in his Dictionary.

It is well known that Johnson acquired a young black slave called Francis, or Frank, Barber. The boy had been born a slave in Jamaica and had been brought to England in 1750 by his master, Colonel Richard Bathurst. He joined Johnson's household in 1752, after Terry's death and at about the same time as the blind poetess Anna Williams, when he was only 10 years old. Frank became a symbol of Johnson's lifelong, race prejudice and unfairness to other races. Dr Burchfield has been detecting the influence of Frank in Johnson's definitions of words to do with blackness and slavery in the Dictionary.

Compare the relative restraint of his definitions compared with those of Scott's revision (1764) of Nathan Bailey's dictionary, from which Johnson also drew heavily.

Scott's Bailey, on the other hand, is a master; not a freeman; a dependant; a perpetual servant; a drudge.

Savage: Dr Johnson: a man untamed and uncivilized; a barbarian.

Scoundrel: a wild Indian, or barbarian, having no fixed habitation, religion, law or policy.

Bailey included the contemptuous and well-established word *pickaninny*. It is not in Johnson's Dictionary. Burchfield's class of words to do with blackness and slavery and Johnson's illustrative examples and his definitions are surprisingly neutral and unprejudiced.

He detects a significant change in Johnson's treatment

of brewing terms. In the first edition of the Dictionary the terms of the brewing trade are predominantly drawn from and illustrated by examples from John Mortimer's *Manual of Husbandry* (1707) and from a small number of other standard works. Johnson had to rely on such works for information, and did so in a routinely systematic way. By 1772, however, he had been called on by Hester Thrale to help her with the managing of the Thrale's brewing business. It can hardly be coincidence that the definitions of some of the brewing terms were subtly improved in the fourth edition of the Dictionary, published the following year.

Compare the following: 1755 gill: a measure of liquids containing the fourth part of a pint. 1773 gill: repeated, but with the qualification "in the northern counties it is half a pint of liquid measure". 1755 hogshead: a measure of liquids containing 60 gallons. 1773 hogshead: a measure of liquids containing 63 gallons. 1755 strike: a bushel, a dry measure of capacity. 1773 strike: a bushel, a dry measure of capacity; four pecks.

Finally Dr Burchfield suggests that the six endearing amanuenses named by Boswell as working at one time or another with Johnson on the Dictionary in fact did a great deal more than just copy out quotations marked by Johnson, as has been supposed since Boswell. Johnsonian scholars may greatly underestimate the part they played in the Dictionary, especially the Englishman, John Panton (who taught French), and Alexander Macbean who, according to Johnson, knew several languages but nothing of life. The amanuenses may have been responsible for some of the quotations wrongly attributed in the Dictionary to Johnson himself.

They collected 240,000 quotations altogether, of which 4,000 appear in Johnson's Dictionary of 1755. Mr F. D. Hayes, a former headmaster, has worked part-time for Dr Burchfield as an amanuensis for several years. He copies at a rate that would yield 50,000 quotations. He worked 40 hours a week in a year of 50 weeks.

Philip Howard

Present Laughter Greenwich

Ned Chaillet

Ego-proof acting parts are hard to come by, but who better to provide them than Noël Coward? Gary Essendine in *Present Laughter* is one of the most self-regarding parts ever written, a role largely immune to the twinkling little satellites of the other characters who are brought in for a joke, a scene or a harrance. The last time I saw the play it starred Peter O'Toole, lately of the *Coronation Street*, and it was the sort of vic and eccentric timing, his remote, amused interest in the proceedings.

Essendine is the spider who occasionally steps on the web where other characters are buzzing like trapped flies, fascinated and aggravated by Essendine's presence. Because the character is meant to be a star of romantic comedy, ruthless in the ways of sex, friendship, and love, it takes an actor who can exude vanity and self-absorption to play the role. Donald Sinden, who knows how to exude for effect, how to concentrate entirely on his worries and take advantage of the adulation of friends and fans.

The problems that Coward provides are tricky enough to attract Essendine's attention much of the play, even if his main instinct is to disregard the people in the problems. Essendine performs, with lovers ex-wife, secretary, and friends, and even acknowledges that he is performing. He uses his

trickiness to chase away the society girl who has seduced him, telling her: "I'm always acting, watching myself go by." When making love to the wife of a close friend, he quotes the sweet nothings from one of his roles.

Mr Sinden grasps the part more like an Irving than Coward, and the agonies of the third act, when he unravels the farcical complications with exasperation at the sexual intrigues, move him to suggest the postures of a theatrical print of Macready. He is outlandishly theatrical, arms thrown out in despair, and he is immensely watchable down to the quiver of his jowls.

Alan Strachan has arranged the scenes around Mr Sinden with care and even the wild extravagances of the mad young playwright, played with sinister energy by Julian Fellowes, find their punch lines in the irritated responses of Mr Sinden. Gwen Watford brings an affectionate tolerance to the role of the secretary, but there is a slackness in the relationship with his ex-wife.

The fault is not in Dinah Sheridan's presence, but in the language of her attitude. She often seems an audience rather than a force and varies between secretarial poise, wifely amusement, and motherly concern. But with the intensity of Mr Sinden's performance something more active is required.

There seem to be anticipations of the glossy acting company provided and it would hardly be surprising. Peter Rice's handsome setting is as apt as the design for the company's last Coward transfer, *Private Lives*.

Virginia Theatre Royal, Haymarket

Irving Wardle

"You could write her, anybody could", Edna O'Brien told an interviewer last week. "There could be 50 plays about her." I take this to mean that the ever increasing mountain of letters, diaries, and memoirs of the Bloomsbury Circle down to last week's addition from Frances Parridge is such that all three intending playwrights need do is to take his pick.

It would be hard to think of two more different plays than Peter Luke's *Bloomsbury* (the West End's last tribute to the subject) and Miss O'Brien's *Virginia*; the latter a coleslaw roundup of the celebrities for uninformed spectators, the second an intimate portrait of Mrs Woolf for people who can snap up every glancing reference to Nessa, Clive, Lynton, and Suffolk (a servant, it seems), and do not need to be told that she wrote books or operated a printing press.

How much of the text is O'Brien and how much subtitled out of the heroine's indefatigable day-by-day self-observations, is beyond me to disentangle; but the shape of the piece unmistakably points to its authorship. It tells the story of a fragile, doomed personality briefly coming into flower under the warming rays of an illicit love affair.

Virginia Woolf's attachment to Mrs Harold Nicolson was evidently a delicious interlude

in her sexless marriage, and it supplies one obviously stage-worthy episode in the uneventful chronicle of writing, publishing, and party going. But it does not earn the crucial part of the evening in *Virginia* in the cycle of incidents she has chosen.

The piece is written for three actors, with Nicholas Pennell doubling as the heroine's father and as a friend of Woolf. It opens prophetically with a drawing image, which one expects to see tracked to its source in the scenes that follow. But, instead, we get a high-speed tour of her childhood, vindictively characterizing her father as selfish and stingy; the escape with her sister to the freedom of Gordon Square where free life and free speech begin when Strachey gets away with mentioning jargon in mixed company; her jealous fury at her sister's marriage, followed by her own stormy capitulation to the dogged, pipe-smoking Leonard. What has been established by this time is her loathing of sexual intercourse and her fear of returning madly to her father in short, to prepare the way for her enraptured response to the masterful Mrs Nicolson.

All in all, it is not much of a homecoming for our best comic actress. Maggie Smith goes through the evening in a long dark skirt, bony hands dangling from the sleeves of a cardigan, never suggesting Virginia Woolf's obsession with good clothes. This costume does supply a blank canvas for the actress to fill; and Miss Smith achieves some amazing transformations—shedding and gaining years, switching between the submissive ingénue and the derisive critic, yanked on to a

dance floor by an invisible partner for a humiliating scramble round the floor, and (reverting to what her London audiences will remember best) turning on that gravel voice for scathingly well-learned bitching. "Who was that elderly virgin Clive brought with stationary eyes like an oyster?"

This by no means exhausts the variety of the performance, which also touches moods of spontaneous fun, and exclusive bitterness, as where she conducts an imaginary interview with a journalist she has shown the door: "The subject of her writing was the little world of people like herself, a small class, a dying class."

But whatever its explorations, it always reverts to the central mood of unexplained anguish, unavoidably dictated by the text and extremely hard to take in the compressed phrase-making dialogue where (as "ground as a peacock" obtrudes like a missing button on a dress suit).

Played in front of a labyrinth of tall gauze screens, suggesting a conservatory or a deserted museum, Robin Phillips's production adopts a convention of poised slow-motion which seems mainly designed to solve the play's double time scale; the sense of years and minutes both ticking away simultaneously. Nicholas Pennell's Leonard and Patricia Connolly's Mrs Nicolson are at once physically present, invisible, and images in a dream. The style is applied with a consistency that cannot be faulted; its drawback is that it adds to the bloodless lethargy of the occasion.

Cinderella Coliseum

Stanley Sadie

There is a charming touch of the chic about Roger Butlin's set for Rossini's *Cinderella*: a round white structure which, facing one way, is Don Magnifico's living room and, facing the other, a chamber in Don Ramiro's palace. Its coolness, its neatness, its wit and its sheer efficiency make it especially apt to this particular opera.

The set was originally designed for an English Music Theatre production, of which Colin Graham had charge; last year the production was taken over by the English National Opera, and it is one of their happiest. At Friday's revival, it was conducted by Stephen Bond, who clearly is an unusually gifted Russian. The overture, after an unsure start, had real verve and plenty of tension, too; and the whole evening was distinguished by his alert, spry rhythms, his confident timing, his nice shaping of Rossini's crescendos, his precise control over articulation. There was tidy playing from the strings, and shapely woodwind solo work.

The sole newcomer to the

cast was Thomas Hemsley, who offers a Don Magnifico more interesting than most, not just a traditional caricature of a testy old man, but a realistic impersonation with as much depth of character, especially in his cruel streak, as Rossini will allow. His gait on stage, his range of facial expression, his fussiness—not to mention his fruitily singing or especially his command of words (and when he clears a chamber in Don Ramiro's palace, it makes this a happily polished reading).

Della Jones, in the title-role, was in dazzling form in the *fioritura*, with her scale passages as perfect and as even as a row of pearls. But too often the relative her imitation was liable to slip, marring what was a beautifully poised performance. Her Ramiro Graham Clark is, clearly, incisively, lovably sung (he should remember this in the coliseum, which the Coliseum is: a hint more of warmth in the voice, of shapely cantabile, would have been welcome. Alan O'Connell, a resourcefully witty Dandini, especially in his spry rhythms, his confident timing, his nice shaping of Rossini's crescendos, his precise control over articulation. There was tidy playing from the strings, and shapely woodwind solo work.

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William Mann

Part two of the great Stravinsky Festival was at one time in terrible danger of not taking place, due to shortage of money, but on Friday it took off most gloriously. The concert concentrated on the vocal music, and its first programme combined Stravinsky's bipartite tribute to St Mark's in Venice (the city where his bodily remains reside) with his ballet *Swetshka*, which we should properly call *The Wedding*, though it is most widely known as *Les noces*, perhaps because it was first performed in Paris.

Stravinsky laboured nine years over *The Wedding*, overtly his musical farewell to the land of his fathers, and the most intensely Russian of all his music. He knew that it must

involve vocal soloists and chorus, and at first he accompanied them with full orchestra. He was in the throes of a creative metamorphosis; as he passed through it, the orchestra was dropped in favour of assorted keyboard instruments and percussion, eventually becoming the four pianos plus kitchen that you will hear if you go to the revival of the ballet currently at Covent Garden.

There were four more or less complete versions of *The Wedding*, and the inestimable revelation of Friday's concert (recorded by the BBC and broadcast last night) was that we heard the last three (the first was abandoned almost at once) in the course of one evening. I mean: hard work for the London Sinfonietta Chorus, harder for the four vocal soloists, especially Felicity Palmer who, as the bride, dominates most of the music, her voice persistently clinging to

the most awkward notes in a soprano's vocal compass, called the *passaggio*. She deserves some medal for valour, since her voice never faltered once, and the tone-colour was quite ideal throughout.

Hardest worked was the conductor of the festival, David Atherton, who had to learn the entire score of all three versions, which differ in small details as well as in orchestral constitution. He deserves a medal because each of the three performances was distinctively projected, and each kept the music on the tight, pulsating rein required. If there was a reservation to be made, it was only that the chorus sounded a little timid now and then.

Each of the three versions has its virtues: the first, with full orchestra, is the most colourful, the clarinets and the heavy brass illuminating particular moments, and their structural context, in thrilling fashion. In the second, the

clatter of two Hungarian cymbaloms dominates the music: the blend with harmonium, piano (Stravinsky wanted a piano), but found an impractical Colin Matthews has transcribed the part for two ordinary pianos) and percussion suits the atmosphere best of all.

For one, am sorry that Stravinsky abandoned it two-thirds through, much as I love the definitive third version, and was confirmed in that love at the end of the evening—the solemn peal of church bells, on pianos and crotales as well as bell, while the bridal couple retire to bed.

It was a pleasure also to hear the *Canticum Sacrum* again, serially dogmatic sometimes, but dedicated throughout to melodious line and hieratic solemnity (very Russian), likewise Stravinsky's most solicitous creative transcription of J. S. Bach's "Vom Himmel hoch" variations.



Igor Stravinsky... "in the throes of a creative metamorphosis"

Belisario Royal Academy of Music

Hilary Finch

At La Fenice in 1836 it "conquered, enflamed, ravished the full auditorium"; by 1840 Donizetti's *Belisario* had conquered Europe. Three years after the opera rose from its late nineteenth-century ashes (Venice again, 1964), the Royal Academy tried it out at Sadler's Wells, was praised, albeit more moderately, by English critics, and has chosen it again, with the same producer, Dennis Maund, for its own Jack Lyons theatre.

In a triptych of Triumph, Exile, and Death, *Belisario*, unjustly accused of treachery by his wife, is blinded, exiled, yet finally victorious and vindicated in death, the enemy conquered, his wife repentant and remorseful.

The shift away from conventional love interest to high heroics and family relationships throws the concerted numbers sharply into focus; on

Thursday a strongly disciplined and bright-toned chorus gave admirable musical support and impetus to some dramatically weak moments, though the orchestra, conducted with spirit by Gordon Kember, as yet lacked sufficient discipline and assured ease.

Jared Salmon's steely, Italianate tenor nicely served the insidious treachery of Eutropio, while Geoffrey Dolton's Belisario, earnest and confident of voice and manner, lacked only a sharper edge of vocal colour to be truly memorable.

Whether glinting, knife-sharp in cold calculation, or gently lyrical in repentance, Gillian Macdonald's flexible and powerful soprano fleshed out the less-than-human Antonina, though she needs to move with greater freedom and confidence. Throughout her long, strenuous part, Jean Rigby, an exceptionally mature and well-integrated mezzo-soprano, brought to the role of Irene a quite unforgettable end, on this occasion, unmatchable musical breadth and emotional depth.

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The World About Us BBC 2

Michael Church

Jeremy Marre's latest film on Third World music, shown in *The World About Us* slot, was as rivetingly strange as any of its predecessors. The images he brought back from South Africa two years ago remain vividly in my mind, and they will now be joined by images from Brazil: blindingly bright carnival costumes, flowers and perfumes scattered on the waters at dusk, an austere, beautiful initiation ceremony,

dances in martial and mystical trances.

If I remember the commentary it will be with less admiration. It seemed initially a good idea to get a Latin American to do it, those blandly travelogueish BBC voices are irritating at the best of times and quite insufferable when used to report on the miseries of the oppressed. This was a film about the resilience of the poor and the courage of their popular singers.

But the indelible voice of Third World political rhetoric, bor from the pages of Paulo Freire and friends, has a hackle-raising quality of its

own. It is not a matter of anger (of course it should be angry) nor entirely a matter of predictability: you can take local uniqueness into account and still discover the same systematic inhumanities.

The trouble with the identikit voice is that it is itself only selectively humane. We were shown a singer who had sold out to the international scene: the voice observed, without translating, "his lyrics mean nothing at all". The voice spoke scathingly of topos beaches and soft porn: the film's voluptuous close-ups of gyrating loins were course a heroic political affirmation

of cultural resistance. Heads we win. The archetypal economic debate which gets *Sense and Sensibility* to such a cracking state, was perfectly realized on the outset of Alexander Baron's deft dramatization (BBC 1). Amanda Boxer brought to the part of Fanny Dashwood a quiet, insidious, lethal quality which Peter Gale, as her vacillating husband, provided an appropriate foil. One of the astutest things about this production is its pace. Jane's books may have swayed but her characters would have moved through their day at a pace very much

slower than our own. The designs are good, the acting is excellent. The differences between Elinor and Marianne are nicely pointed up by the device of setting them on a swing and Colonel Brandon, Mrs Jennings and Sir John Middleton embody respectively the requisite amounts of dignified sadness, garrulity, and bone-headed heartiness.

So far the only faults concern the infatuations. Yesterday the Edward Ferrars episode was too lightly sketched in, and next week's instalment quite fails to convey the supposedly devastating charms of Willoughby.

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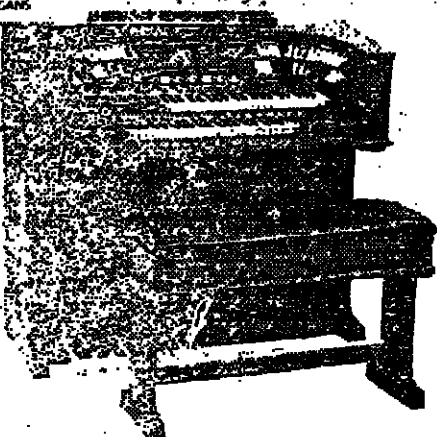
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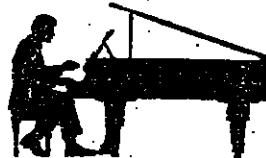
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For two centuries and more  
the piano has been the  
great midwife of music,  
essential to the work not  
only of professional per-  
formers but also of con-  
ductors, scholars, com-  
posers and teachers. String players  
may be able to survive with-  
out gaining any skill on it—  
may have to, given the  
amount of time they must  
devote to their own in-  
struments—but otherwise learn-  
ing the piano must be the  
first step towards becoming  
a musician. It is heartening,  
therefore, that in the piano  
world there are so many  
signs of vigour, enthusiasm  
and growth.

This is especially remark-  
able at a time when, so it  
seems, no High Street is  
complete without its  
emporium stacked with  
monstrous electronic organs.  
Happily the piano retains  
its primacy, as it must do if  
we are to remain concerned  
with music, and not with  
mere playing-by-numbers.

That is not to say, though,  
that there is no room for  
alternatives. Indeed,  
increasing numbers of people  
are discovering the attrac-  
tions of the piano's an-  
cestors, the clavicord,  
the harpsichord, the forte-  
piano and their relatives, all  
of which can be had in  
modestly priced modern  
reproductions. And the real  
organ, the king of in-  
struments, keeps its dedicated  
band of subjects in thrall.

If one wants evidence of  
the development of key-  
board playing in Britain,  
then one need look no fur-  
ther than the statistics  
published by the Associated  
Board of the Royal Schools  
of Music, whose examina-  
tions are used by most  
teachers and budding musi-  
cians as a yardstick. There  
are no A/B exams in  
"early" instruments—the  
implicit view is, rightly,  
that children should be  
started on the piano, then in-  
vestigate historical keyboards  
later if they wish—and the  
population of young  
organists seems to be  
fairly constant, but the  
numbers of entrants for the  
piano examination are in-  
creasing markedly.

To take just one example,  
the number entering for  
the most elementary exam,  
grade I, jumped from just

under 25,000 in 1975 to  
nearly 39,000 in 1979, the  
last year for which figures  
are available. That is an in-  
crease of roughly 56 per  
cent in four years, some-  
thing far different in scale  
from any change in the popu-  
lation during that time.  
And in the other lower  
grades the growth has been  
hardly less astonishing, sug-  
gesting an extraordinary  
push to the keyboard among  
children roughly from eight

to 13. Why should this have  
happened and, as all the  
signs indicate, be contin-  
uing? No doubt, some of the  
reasons may be due to local  
authorities which have  
encouraged their young  
pianists, whether by making  
provision for lessons in  
school, by paying in part or  
in whole for private lessons,  
and generally by presenting  
music as a live, engaging  
subject.

It would be sad if any of  
this good work were to be  
lost. But if local government  
has to be less generous it is  
certain that the torch will  
continue to be carried for-  
ward by the professional  
private teachers, among  
whom it is possible to

detect a burgeoning of opti-  
mism and energy. To some  
extent this is due to the em-  
ergence from the music col-  
leges of a generation of young  
people dedicated to private  
teaching. One of the criticisms  
of the Gulbenkian report on  
music education, published  
four years ago, was that col-  
leges tended to provide  
training for schoolteachers  
but not for those working at  
home; this is now begin-  
ning to change.

Moreover, the new, pro-  
fessional teacher is not  
afraid to charge a profes-  
sional fee, nor are parents  
averse to paying more for  
teachers who show drive  
and have some understand-  
ing of how to guide  
children towards skill and  
enjoyment.

The rising standards in  
music teaching must also be  
attributed in part to the  
work of the professional  
associations, the In-  
corporated Society of Musi-  
cians and the European  
Piano Teachers' Association.  
The latter has been running  
for only three years but has  
already done much through  
its journal and its meetings  
to give teachers information

and support. Rising stand-  
ards here inevitably lead to  
rising standards among  
pupils: of those 39,000 who  
took grade I in 1979, more  
than 12 per cent passed  
with distinction, compared  
with less than 9 per cent in  
1975.

It will be some years  
before those taking grade I  
in the late 1970s are knock-  
ing on the door of the  
Royal Academy of Music, but  
even now there seems to be a  
constant gradual rise in the  
standards of applicants  
reaching the colleges. This  
in turn is reflected in the  
growing ranks of British key-  
board artists of international  
standing.

For every Curzon or Lyn-  
pany of the older genera-  
tion there are a dozen out-  
standing pianists in their  
thirties and forties, and  
Britain can also boast some  
of the world's leading  
specialists in early keyboard  
music, like Christopher  
Pinnock, as well as the for-  
midable organists who have  
always been its blessing.  
Yet it would be wrong to  
suppose that a nation's  
continued on facing page

## Nest of pipes that's a work of art...

Britain's market for pipe  
organs, once almost exclu-  
sively churches and concert  
halls, has widened over the  
years. Universities and  
schools are now among the  
builders' clients, and some  
instruments are bought for  
private use.

This is one reason for a  
growth in demand. In their  
two volumes on *The Classical  
Organ in Britain*, published  
by Positif Press, John P.  
Rowntree and John F. Green  
point out that while 118  
new organs with mechanical  
action were bought in the 19  
years up to 1974, in the next  
four years 106 were supplied.  
But it is fair to say that  
while the market has grown,  
clients have been buying  
smaller instruments than in  
the past. This partly reflects  
rising costs, particularly  
heavy in an industry which  
requires hand craftsmanship  
and scarce materials, such as  
seasoned hardwood, ivory  
and metal alloys.

Many British firms belong  
to the Federation of Master  
Organ Builders, but some do  
not. A number have been  
in business for decades, but  
it tends to be a changing  
scene, with large firms buy-  
ing up smaller concerns, and  
young men setting up their  
own companies.

Change has been accentuated  
by the requirements of  
churches, with unconventional  
shapes, and of liturgy in the  
modern vernacular. There is  
also the taste for the  
classical revival sound. As  
one builder put it, the roast  
beef of nineteenth-century  
English organs has been  
replaced with instruments  
more suitable for playing  
Bach.

This evolution has encour-  
aged imports from coun-  
tries where the organ is  
the heart of a London firm said:  
"I think the import flow has  
eased up. We export quite a  
lot". He thought the intro-  
duction of the cinema organ  
had adversely affected

Moreover, new sales  
account for only about one  
third of the workload. Renova-  
tion (in which an old  
organ is restored to its origi-  
nal state, including any  
imperfections it may have  
had) and rebuilding (when  
parts of the original are in-  
corporated in a modernised  
one) are big business to  
some master builders.

The larger the organ, the  
more likely it is that the  
owner or congregation will  
have a sentimental attach-  
ment to it. Since a thorough  
rebuild may cost two thirds  
of the price of a new instru-  
ment, the builder will often  
advise against spending  
money on an organ without  
real historic or musical value  
as uneconomical. One told me  
he could cost him £600 just  
to make a survey and esti-  
mate the cost of work  
required.

One instrument, I read,  
has "all in all, a nice set  
of automatics", while  
another is praised for its  
synthesizer and auto arpeg-  
gio section. In a third, "the  
accordian has a slight delay  
in build-up to simulate the  
slow attack of a reed instru-  
ment". The road-test analogy  
reached its peak with one  
new model, described as  
easier to drive than many  
organs now on sale. It is  
possible for the do-it-your-  
selfer to build an organ,  
although tinkering with  
anything electrical is not  
recommended for people  
who are not absolutely sure  
what they are doing.

But the basic appeal of the  
electronic organ is not its  
association with the car,  
not even the portable which  
will run off a battery. People  
buy one because they  
like the sound it makes,  
incidentally, if you have  
neighbours who do not like  
the sound, there are models  
fitted with earphones.

There is also the advantage  
of being able to make recog-  
nizable, without years of  
practice. "You can play  
a little tune in about half an  
hour", a salesman said.

Mr L. S. Long, secretary of  
the Federation of Organ  
Clubs, said: "I know of  
people in their 80s who have  
started to learn, as well as  
the very young. The old idea  
of family entertainment  
where someone used to play  
the piano in the parlour has  
come back, but now every-  
one can join in".

It is believed there are  
about 350 electronic organ  
societies of one kind or  
other in Britain. Some are  
devoted to the preservation  
of cinema organs.

As with pipe organs, part  
of the appeal is the variety  
and volume of accompani-  
ment that can be married to  
even a one-finger exercise.  
A manufacturer advertises a  
choice of gadgets which will  
add the effects of a cathedral  
choir or a big band at a  
touch.

British pipe organ manu-  
facturers between the wars.  
Modern church organs  
face one hazard that those of  
former days did not—heating  
gears to energy saving.  
Systems which blast out  
warm air for a short period  
while worshippers are at  
their devotions, then switch  
off sharply, cause a good  
deal of condensation and  
damage to metalwork.

But in another way build-  
ers find life is now easier for  
them. Many old organs were  
placed in corners where they  
may have looked elegant but  
were difficult to play and  
the working parts were in-  
accessible to the craftsmen  
called in to carry out repairs.

Organists have more say  
in the placing now. As one  
commentator said, it should  
always be remembered the  
organ is a musical instru-  
ment as well as a work of art.

Patrick O'Leary

## ...and an organ that's almost automatic

There are those unkind  
enough to say an electronic  
organ is the ideal gift for a  
man who does not like  
music. To which retailers  
retort that £60m a year tinkle-  
ling through the tills is a hit  
tune in anybody's chart. Un-  
fortunately, that is the figure  
for sales in 1979, and indica-  
tions are that the outcome  
for last year will be sharply  
lower—one estimate is £36m.

However, it is still a busi-  
ness which has come a long  
way in a short time, buoyed  
up by enthusiastic promo-  
tion. Anyone leafing through  
the magazines *Organ Player*  
and *Home Organist* will find  
test runs of the newest key-  
boards whose language rivals  
that of motoring correspon-  
dents. The similarity is  
enhanced by the knowl-  
edge that with more than 40  
firms competing for an  
annual market of 25,000 elec-  
tronic organs and related  
units, British production is  
outpaced by imports from  
Japan, America and Italy.

Controversy still simmers  
over whether electronic  
organs are suitable for  
church music. A trade as-  
sociation spokesman assured  
me that church authorities  
were getting over the  
bias against them, while  
an organist asserted that  
churches which had elec-  
tronic organs were redis-  
covering their bias against  
them.

Perhaps the last word  
should be given to the man  
who sold one to the Caldy  
Island monastery in Carmar-  
then Bay. This involved a  
five-mile voyage on the deck  
of a small ship, and on the  
island the journey continued  
in a trailer drawn by a farm  
tractor.

Such hard-sell may have  
been a case of needs must  
when the devil drives. The  
supplier was quoted as say-  
ing: "The monks wanted to  
replace their old single-  
manual organ which had  
given up the ghost".

P. O'L.

## Cheap foreign imports challenge British piano makers

Cheaper imports from for-  
eign manufacturers are  
increasingly challenging  
British piano makers in  
their home market. In the  
first nine months of 1980  
imports took 51 per cent of  
sales in the United King-  
dom. Most of these instru-  
ments are upstarts from  
makers in Eastern Europe  
and countries like South  
Korea, Taiwan, China, Brazil  
and even the United States.

This import penetration  
comes at a time of falling  
demand. The British in-  
dustry estimates that the market  
was down about 29 per cent  
in the first nine months of  
last year compared with the  
similar period in 1979. But  
during this time imports fell  
by only 10 per cent so that  
their share rose from 40 to  
51 per cent.

British manufacturers say  
that pianos from such areas  
as Eastern Europe are being  
sold in Britain for little more  
than the cost of the raw  
materials used to produce  
them. While the retail price  
of the least expensive British  
upright is about £1,000 to  
£1,200, an imported piano  
can be bought for about £800  
to £900.

The worries of British  
makers, who produce about  
20,000 pianos a year, are  
shared by those elsewhere in  
Western Europe, and the in-  
dustry in the European Eco-  
nomic Community has com-  
plained to the EEC Commis-  
sion about competition from  
the Eastern block. The British  
and continental companies  
are particularly con-  
cerned about imports from  
East Germany and Poland,  
not only because of the dif-  
ference in prices, but also  
because Western producers  
do not have compensating  
outlets in the East.

Complaints about East  
Germany must be put into  
perspective. "Leipzig is the  
home of the famous firm of  
Blüthner. One leading British  
expert described the  
standard of lesser East Ger-  
man models as "quite fair",  
but he referred to the over-  
all quality of pianos from  
South Korea, Taiwan and  
China as "scarcely ade-  
quate". Another specialist  
agreed that technically such  
instruments could be im-  
proved, but he thought that  
a buyer was not necessarily  
failing to get value for what  
he paid.

There is also concern  
about cheap American pianos  
coming into Britain. One  
sales director said that  
while allegations of cheap  
Mexican labour being em-  
ployed had not been con-  
firmed, there were grounds  
for suspecting American  
pianos were being dumped  
in Britain. Imported up-  
rights from the United States  
were selling at £800 or £900.

Another anxiety is about  
the absence of country-of-  
origin markings on some im-  
ported pianos. This means  
that a South Korean product  
with a German-sounding  
name can be imported into  
Britain through Holland  
and there is nothing to tell  
a potential customer that he  
is not looking at a German  
model.

One complaint is that  
many pianos which are gen-  
uinely German come from  
East Germany, and a mem-  
ber of the public may imag-  
ine they are from the high-  
quality manufacturers in the  
Federal Republic. Some  
cheap imports carry the  
name of their country of  
origin, but the British are  
lobbying the Government to  
tighten identification.

Japanese imports do not  
involve the cheaper end of  
the market. The popularity  
of western music in Japan is  
now so great that the bulk  
of production is absorbed  
domestically. The demand  
for Yamahas in the United  
Kingdom is greater than the  
annual import figure of  
about 600 or 700.

While some months have  
shown an improvement in  
the market since the autumn,  
the British piano makers  
face a number of problems  
other than the threat of  
cheap imports. More than  
half British production nor-  
mally goes for export and two-  
thirds of this to the rest of  
the EEC. West Germany has  
been the best overall mar-  
ket.

But the exchange rate is  
creating difficulties for sales  
in West Germany, and it has  
narrowed the traditional gap  
between the retail prices of  
German uprights and similar  
local pianos in the British  
market.

This suggests that competi-  
tion may sharpen in the

middle market at home and  
in Europe. One British  
manufacturer estimated that  
the effect of the exchange  
rate and normal price in-  
creases meant that their  
costs were 24 per cent  
higher than their competi-  
tors in France and Germany.  
If it were not for the high  
pound, there would be no  
problems at selling on the  
Continent.

Some Japanese uprights  
are several hundred pounds  
cheaper in the United King-  
dom than similar British in-  
struments, again partly as a  
result of the exchange rate.

There has been some  
rationalization of production  
in Britain. John Broadwood  
and Sons, which has made  
pianos since 1728 and whose  
instruments were admired by  
Clementi, Haydn, Beethoven  
and Chopin, now has its up-  
rights made under licence  
by Kemble. Finding its  
works too small, Broadwood  
says that this arrangement  
enables it to increase pro-  
duction levels and maintain  
quality.

It continues to make its  
own grands to order. Its in-  
struments have never been  
produced for stock, and it  
says that demand has always  
outstripped production.

Two firms, Zender and  
Rogers, closed last year and  
their pianos are now pro-  
duced under licence by  
Barratt and Robinson, which  
some years ago took over  
Challen.

There would be more  
secondhand pianos on the  
British market if fewer were  
not exported. Last year  
Britain sent 20,000 pianos  
abroad, but only 11,000 of  
these were new. The older  
instruments go to countries  
like France and Italy.

Some tastes change. The  
baby grand, which makes  
inferior music to a good  
upright, has gone out of  
fashion. Adults now seem  
less inhibited about taking  
up the piano again or even  
learning from scratch. The  
enthusiasm for taking exami-  
nations, however, shows no  
sign of abating, and sales  
suggest a strong fidelity to  
the piano. Pianists are not  
easily tempted by such  
gadgets as electronic organs.

Denis Taylor

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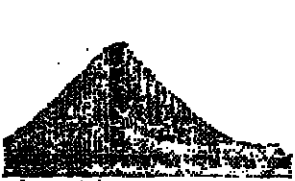
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## KEYBOARD INSTRUMENTS

## Boom in antiques and reproductions

One feature of the early music boom of the past 15 years has been the enormous growth in the market for antique and reproduction keyboard instruments. Sadly, this has meant the passing of the days when you could pick up an eighteenth-century square piano for a song, but it has also brought into business a great variety of makers producing instruments of all kinds, from fine copies for professional players to fairly elementary kits that need only a modicum of skill to assemble.

The first thing to decide, obviously, is what kind of instrument you want. One of the most popular is the clavichord, readily available from many of the larger manufacturers in kits or finished form, and particularly easy to assemble, being a box-shaped instrument of simple construction and coffee-table size. The clavichord has a type of action all its own, with strings touched by "tangents", and this gives it a

soft, clear sound that was especially admired by Bach. It is indeed, an enchanting instrument for much of his keyboard music, but not really for a great deal else, which is fine if you are happy playing preludes and fugues in pearly tones that sound perfectly at home in a small drawing room.

For greater versatility one must turn to the harpsichord and its two smaller cousins, the spinet and the virginal, all of which have plucked strings and are a little more complicated to build from kits. These are available for the handy person, but ordinary mortals might be better advised to go for the finished article, happily available in a variety of price ranges. One problem with these instruments, and also with the clavichord, is that they go out of tune more readily than does the piano, which may cause problems if you live in a remote area and do not feel able to tune your instrument yourself (though in fact this is not

difficult in the case of small instruments). The harpsichord was the standard domestic keyboard instrument throughout most of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and its repertoire is vast, from Frescobaldi through Bach, Scarlatti and the French clavichordists to Haydn. But it is quite possible to play most of this music also on the spinet, essentially a baby harpsichord, or on the virginal, an oblong cousin, despite the latter instrument's special association with Elizabethan English music. Moreover, these smaller instruments are not only generally cheaper but also more appropriate, in terms of size and sound quality, for smaller rooms.

One last group of instruments to be considered is the early piano family. Square pianos are still available at auction at £200-£300, but if you want an instrument that works you will have to spend very much more than that on restoration. Wing-shaped instruments of the eighteenth and

## Consumers' guide to purchase and maintenance

## Pianos

**New**  
Prices for uprights range from about £800 for a Polish Legnica to more than £5,000 for a Steinway or Bechstein. For grands, from about £2,600 for an East German Zimmermann to nearly £23,000 for a Bösendorfer Imperial concert grand.

## Secondhand

"Approach buying a piano as you would a car," Mr Peter Roberts of The Piano House, in London, says. "Remember that it is a machine not a piece of furniture." Avoid wooden-frame pianos, which will not stay in tune, and straight-strung instruments, where the strings run parallel to each other, as opposed to overstrung ones, where the bass strings cross over the treble.

If buying from a piano shop you should expect that the piano has been reconditioned and you should be offered a guarantee. The Piano House prices are from £400 to £2,000 for an overstrung upright and from £800 to £10,000 for a grand. Many piano shops have sales in January and at one or two other times in the year.

## Hiring

The cost of hiring is based on the value of the instrument. At Morley's in south-east London, for example, the monthly rental is approximately 2 per cent of the value (for example £36 for a piano worth £1,200). After a year you can either return the instrument, or buy it, or buy another instrument of lesser or greater price. Three-quarters of the sum you have paid in rent will be deducted from the price.

## Reconditioning

With high labour costs the case for reconditioning an old piano has become more marginal, Morley's says that whereas 10 years ago reconditioned instruments accounted for 70 per cent of its sales, today the figures are 5 per cent for uprights and 15 per cent for grands. You have to decide whether your money might not be better spent on a new instrument. Costs of reconditioning vary widely and you should shop around. Because of

small overheads a person working on his own should be able to undercut a larger operation, but you need to be sure of his qualifications. The Piano Workshop in Hampstead quotes from £500 to £1,500 for an upright and up to £3,000 for a grand.

Mr Roberts of The Piano House breaks down the reconditioning process into: rebuilding of the action, £250 to £300 (upright), £300 to £500 (grand); repinning, £350 (upright), £450 (grand); restringing, £250 (upright), £300 to £500 (grand); repolishing the case, £20 (upright), £30 (grand). Stripping the case, staining it and waxing it will cost between £100 and £150.

## Tuning

This should be done two or three times a year. The cost ranges from about £9 to nearly £14. By drying the atmosphere central heating can cause pianos to go out of tune. The obvious step is to turn down the thermostat or move the piano farther from the radiator.

A hygrometer, costing between £1.50 and £2, can be placed inside the instrument to measure humidity. Remedies against dryness extend from standing cartons of water within the instrument, through a hydrocell unit, which one soaks in the bath then hangs inside the piano (cost about £25), to an electronically-controlled machine with a damp chaser, humidifier and sensing unit (cost about £60).

New pianos, whose timber has been kiln dried and which use chemical rather than animal glues, should withstand central heating better than old instruments.

## Regulating

This involves reducing the slackness in the action and should be done every five to seven years. The job can be carried out at home and costs between £70 and £100.

## Advice on dealers

The Piano Advisory Service, The Cloisters, 11 Salem Road, London W2 4BU. Tel: 01-221 0990/10.

## Early keyboard instruments

## Harpsichords

For an antique prices range from £3,000 to £30,000. For reproductions Robert Goble of Oxford charges between £3,350 and £5,750 (two-

manual concert model, 16ft stop, pedal operated) excluding VAT and John Morley of London between £3,130 and £7,190 (two-manual "Kirkman" model). Prices (excluding VAT) at The Early Music Shop of Bradford and London range from about £1,500 to more than £5,500.

Tuning can be done by the owner much more easily than with a piano. Electronic tuning aids are available.

Restoration. Costing accurately is difficult but the range could be between £450 and £1,000.

Reproduction spinets range in price from about £1,500 to nearly £3,000, reproduction clavichords from about £950 to more than £2,000, reproduction originals from about £1,100 to nearly £2,300. Morley's offers a fortepiano for £7,212. Early instrument kits can be bought from The Early Music Shop. Sample prices (excluding VAT) are from about £730 to £1,900 for harpsichords, about £1,000 for a fretted clavichord, £2,500 for a fortepiano and £635 for an Italian virginal.

## Organs

## Pipe

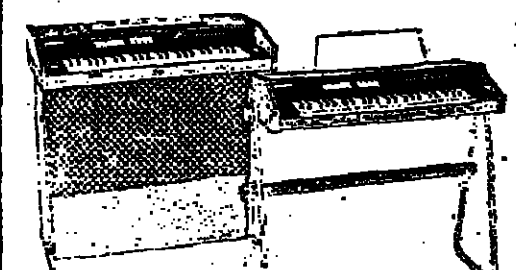
The Early Music Shop offers portable organ kits ranging from about £330 to £2,400 (excluding VAT). For the completed instruments, prices are between about £600 and £3,000. Organs suitable for a church or large house vary from about £7,500 (one manual and pedals) to between £150,000 and £250,000. Advice on buying or restoring organs is available from two bodies, the first Anglican, the second Roman Catholic: Organs Advisory Committee (secretary: Donald Findlay), Council for Places of Worship, 83, London Wall, London EC2M 5NA. Organ Advisory Group (secretary: John Rowntree), The Cottage, 2 Bury Bank, Greenham Common North, Newbury, Berkshire.

## Electronic

Prices quoted by Yamaha, which is the biggest seller in Britain, cover the range of available instruments. They start at about £200 for a portable keyboard and rise to more than £50,000 for the GX1, a machine with three manuals and pedals which Yamaha describes as a "multiple synthesizer" rather than as an organ.

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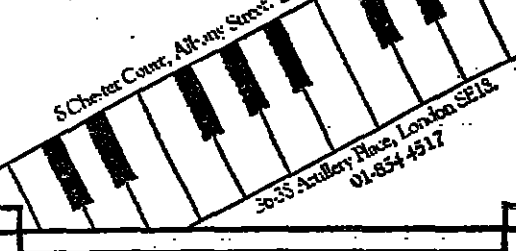
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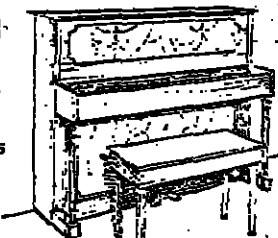
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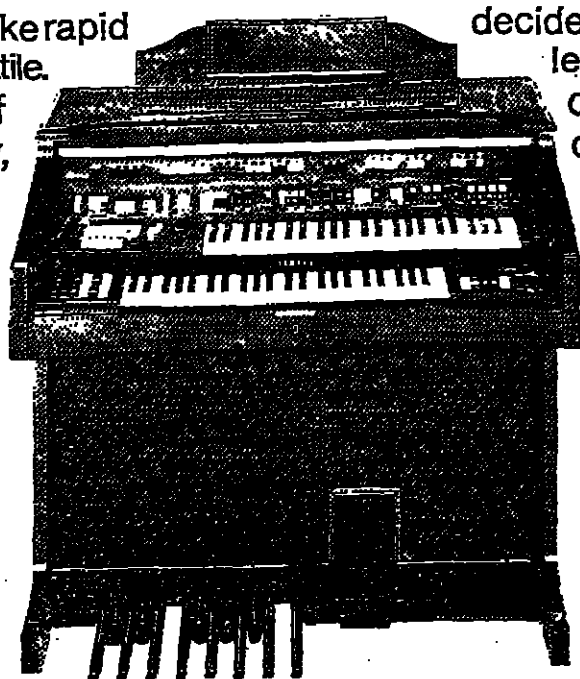
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Lord Chalfont

# The danger signals flash again in the Middle East

It was difficult, on a recent tour of the Middle East, to avoid crossing the distinctive tracks of Foreign Office ministers engaged on reconnaissance missions of various kinds. A set of much larger footprints marked the passage of Dr Henry Kissinger, conducting his own brand of steady-eyed diplomacy.

The problems of the area are never far from the centre of the stage, and there are now clear signs that the Palestinian issue is about to enter a critical and possibly decisive phase. The almost unanimous message of the Arab countries, transmitted persistently to their western visitors and more recently proclaimed unambiguously from the Islamic Conference at Taif in Saudi Arabia, is that a stable Middle East is possible only in the context of an acceptable solution to the Palestinian problem.

If the public pronouncements of the Arab leaders at Taif are to be believed, this seems to involve, among other things, the "liberation" of Jerusalem. It is therefore not too alarmist to suggest that dangerous times lie ahead.

It would be comforting to suppose that, faced with the possibility that an area of profound strategic importance might soon become once more a theatre of war, the West had evolved a common policy designed to counter its vital interests. It is, however, not the case. Disenchantment by the apparent intransigence of Mr. Begin, the Carter administration, before it came to its inglorious and uncompleted end, had begun to dismantle the structure of America's traditional support for Israel and for all practical purposes had abandoned the general direction of policy which began with such euphoria at Camp David.

President Reagan is unlikely to be quite so ready to abandon the Israeli cause, and if Mr.

Shimon Peres, with his more flexible and imaginative approach to the Palestinian problem, should succeed Mr. Begin as Prime Minister of Israel in July, the way might still be open for some modified version of the Camp David formula.

Mr. Peres favours the Jordanian option, in which King Hussein would assume a leading and decisive role in the future of the West Bank. He understands the clear advantages which would accrue not only to Jordan and Israel but to the region as a whole from collaboration in the construction of roads, railways, ports and canals, and underlines the importance to the West of an area of prosperity and stability stretching from the Dead Sea to the Red Sea.

His attitude to Jerusalem postulates freedom of access to the holy places ("they can fly their flags on them if they want to") and a system of self-governing boroughs within the city. Some of the statements from the Islamic Conference suggests that King Hussein might, however, be reluctant to assume the role proposed for him. He is a stronger and more confident leader than he was five years ago; he has an alliance with Iraq, one of the most resolutely anti-Zionist countries in the Middle East; he commands a powerful and loyal army; and he displays all the signs of a rugged and uncompromising independence.

Meanwhile the situation is further complicated by the lingering presence in the wings of the western Europeans. It is the only important foreign policy initiative on which the countries of the EEC have so far been able to agree should be one so fraught with danger. It is, of course, entirely possible that the political and strategic implications of the



King Hussein and Mr Shimon Peres: favouring a Jordanian option on the future of the West Bank.



countries, there will be another war. At the very least this might aggravate the already substantial shift in the balance of power in the area; it might even bring a Russian military presence to the eastern Mediterranean coast.

There is, however, an even worse contingency, which no one can afford to discount. It is that in any future Middle Eastern war the nuclear weapon, Pakistan's "Islamic Bomb" programme is now well advanced; Iraq has a French Osiris-type nuclear reactor and a supply of weapons grade plutonium.

The Iranian air attack on the Iraqi nuclear installation early in the Gulf war did little serious damage and most intelligence assessments indicate that Iraq might have a nuclear bomb in five years at most. Libya has made at least one attempt to acquire nuclear weapons and has also helped to finance the Pakistani programme.

What is more immediately significant is that few serious observers are now in any doubt that Israel already has a substantial stockpile of nuclear weapons and is acquiring missile systems capable of at least intermediate-range delivery. Furthermore, the Israelis, with a three-figure annual inflation rate, are no longer in the mood to spend a large proportion of their national resources maintaining extensive conventional defences.

It is right that the search for a fair and durable settlement in the Middle East should be at the top of the international agenda; but it would be appalling, dangerous to pursue any initiative which might reasonably be perceived by Israel as a threat to its security and eventually to its survival.   
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Venice Declaration have been fully and rigorously analysed, but it is not a proposition upon which it would be prudent to bet a great deal of money.

On the surface the declaration is reasonably pious and well-intentioned, except for its bland assumption that the Palestinian Liberation Organisation "will have to be associated with the negotiations". It is not immediately obvious why Israel should be expected to negotiate with an organization which is openly committed to its destruction. There is indeed something about the Venice Declaration which suggests a severe attack of the Lancaster

House syndrome—a messianic conviction that only "all the parties concerned" can be gathered around a table, the irreconcilable can be reconciled.

Furthermore, behind the Venice Declaration lies a fatal flaw in the contemporary approach of many western countries to international relations—an apparent belief that the formulation of theoretical solutions is an adequate substitute for the practical exercise of power.

After considering confidential position papers submitted by the principal member-states, the Nine have formulated a

series of "options" covering Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories, self-determination for Gaza and the West Bank, security guarantees and the status of Jerusalem. The basic requirement is Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights and East Jerusalem within two years, with security guaranteed by an international force under United Nations auspices.

The range of options for Jerusalem have one element in common—partition in one form or another. What is not clear is what the EEC would do if any or all of these options became

part of an agreement imposed upon Israel (many of them would never be accepted voluntarily) and if Israel were subsequently threatened with attack. For it should never be forgotten that while Arab political concessions can easily be repudiated, Israeli territorial concessions can only be reversed by force.

The hidden assumption seems to be that the responsibility for guaranteeing any agreement will be principally that of the United Nations. References to the United Nations are unlikely to be taken very seriously and western Europe cannot guarantee its own security, much less that of Israel.

The "options" result in settlement, well and good; if not someone else will have to pick up the pieces. President Reagan, on the evidence of his past statements and the attitudes of his new State Department team, is unlikely to be enthusiastic about a European initiative which might conceivably produce a short-term solution but would almost certainly contain the seeds of ultimate disaster.

For there should be no doubt in the mind of any western leader that if Israel believes itself to be abandoned in the interests of western relations with the oil-producing countries and under threat of attack from some of those

## Memo to the Labour Party: prime ministers are chosen by the Queen

Who chooses the Prime Minister? This question, often figured prominently in the debate within the Labour Party about the method of selecting its leader.

It is said, on the one hand, that the new system adopted at the 1980 special conference will give the trade union bosses, who are supposed to manipulate at will the 40 per cent of electoral weight given to the unions affiliated to the Labour Party, the power to select the Prime Minister and even to "recommend" to dismiss him. It is added that this is unconstitutional, undemocratic, dangerous, contemptuous of Parliament and grounds enough for right-thinking people to consider leaving the party and forming another.

It is countered, on the other hand, that the Labour Party has a right to select its leader in its own way, that the new system has been adopted in accordance with the party's constitution and, even, that it will strengthen democracy within the party. In the heat generated by this argument too little attention has been given to the facts of the British constitution and in consequence false assumptions are being made both by those who fear and by those who hope to see a Labour Prime Minister chosen by "extra-parliamentary preference".

Prime Ministers are chosen by the Queen. In inviting a person to form her Government and so to become Prime Minister she is constrained alone by the duty to see that the country's government is carried on.

In consequence of the powers which the House of Commons has won over the centuries to control expenditure and to veto taxes and other essential acts of government the Queen's Government can only be carried on by someone who commands a majority in the Commons; and that is almost bound to be someone who is himself—or

herself—a member of the Commons. Therefore in practice—though not in law—the Queen is constrained to choose her Prime Minister as someone in the Commons who commands the support of a majority there. Frequently, there is only one such person at any given moment. Given the workings of the two-party system he or she is usually the leader of the MPs of whichever of the Conservative or Labour party has a majority in the Commons, although a wider choice can arise if neither has a majority or if the members of the party are indecisive in choosing a leader (note that before Mr. Heath and Mrs. Thatcher almost every Conservative Prime Minister this century became Prime Minister first and party leader second).

Until very recently there was no such person as the Leader of the Labour Party. Until well after Harold Wilson was elected leader, the office to which he and all of his predecessors were elected was that of leader of the Parliamentary Labour Party; and as such the election by fellow MPs of a leader could be regarded as a convenience to the Queen in helping her to identify who, when Labour was in the majority, was likely to be able to carry her Government successfully.

It was only thought to be a trivial act of simplification or vanity when the title was changed to Leader of the Labour Party. But the change of title naturally invited the argument that the Prime Minister, widely defined, should have a hand in electing his own leader. And so, perhaps, it should. Indeed, there is no obligation on it to choose a leader from the House of Commons or indeed to shut the category of peers, criminals, minors, lunatics and aliens who are ineligible for membership of the Commons.

But—and this is the disregarded point—none of this remotely changes the British constitution nor the Queen's duties and prerogatives in some grossly expanded edition of *University Challenge*. Following the train of thought inspired by Mr. Laing, it was possible to appreciate what a highly unlikely set of heroes they are.

Diplomats are hardly anyone's favourite people, except those of other diplomats. In the United States especially they are regarded as a privileged and probably idle gang who feed at the public trough and see exotic places at government expense. Did not President Reagan, after all, gain power partly on a programme of slashing federal spending and the bureaucracy? And was not his very first executive act symbolic of that pledge, when he signed an order



Sir Harold Wilson: he was Prime Minister when the title changed from leader of the Parliamentary Labour Party to Leader of the Labour Party.

obliged to invite someone else to form a government.

That would be likely to be the person who had been—or would have been, had the practice continued—elected leader of the Parliamentary Labour Party under the old system. If, of course, the Labour MPs were willing to follow and support the party leader elected by the conference, no doubt he would be asked to resign only if he refused to do so. There would be no violation of constitutional theory or practice, since it would still be his backing in Parliament, and not his extra-parliamentary status, which would be necessary and sufficient condition of his appointment.

Even more absurd is the suggestion that the Labour Party conference, or the trade union bosses there at, could dismiss a Labour Prime Minister in office. They could, of course, elect a new leader of the Party; but, so what?

A Prime Minister in office must resign if and can be forced to resign only if he cannot carry on the Queen's Government. If he can command a majority in the Commons, no amount of knavery or what-have-you outside can displace him. Even if he loses his majority, he still has a right to call an election and, even then, and even if he loses it, to meet the new Parliament before resigning.

What is more, even if enough Labour MPs deprive the Government of its majority in the Commons were minded to withdraw their support from the existing Labour Prime Minister because of what had happened at the Party conference (and that could have happened over policy or other questions at any time in the past), the Prime Minister would

still have the options of advising the Queen to send for someone else (including the Conservative leader) or to dissolve Parliament, so causing a General Election. This power might well deter MPs from any such move, but even if it did not, it would still be, as it should be, their decision, not the conference's, which mattered.

This whole question, therefore, of how the Prime Minister is chosen is quite unaffected by what arrangements the Labour Party, as distinct from the Parliamentary Labour Party, makes for choosing its leader. The Labour Party conference can change and has changed the Party's constitution; but it cannot and has not changed the British constitution.

The Queen's duties and prerogatives remain what they were; and the de facto need for a majority in Parliament in order to carry on her Government is quite undisturbed. It is only the illiterate and erroneous teachings of some contemporary political science which have engendered the school-boy howler that the nominal leader of an electorally successful party automatically becomes Prime Minister.

There may or may not be sufficient reasons for the creation of a new political party and for adherence to it (the question of the nature of grounds for Party loyalty have been discussed in this space recently). But whatever they are, the bogus argument that the non-parliamentary election of the Party's leader threatens the choice of and the tenure of future Labour Prime Ministers—to the prejudice of the sovereignty of Parliament and national democracy—cannot be one of them.   
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## A change of heart for the disabled

Having got off to an indifferent start with the International Year of Disabled People, there are now signs that the future in Britain for the disabled may not be too gloomy.

The work of Mrs Ursula Keeble, who is employed by 14 disability organizations, has persuaded a number of councils to change their minds about cutting services to the disabled rather than face court action over the legitimacy of such moves.

More crucially, it is now becoming clear that the Government is embarrassed at the way local authorities have responded to their calls for savings and previous ministerial statements about the disabled.

The official party for international year was boycotted by Mr Colin Low, himself a blind lecturer in law, who was invited as president of the National Federation of the Blind. He described the reception to 10 Downing Street as an "obscene irrelevance" when the Government was cutting services to the disabled, including cuts of up to 10 per cent in the value of social security benefits; reductions in local authority services to the handicapped; and a review of the quota system for disabled workers which he said would lead to its abandonment.

Professor Peter Townsend, chairman of the Disability Alliance, attended the reception both to present to the Prime Minister the text of a resolution passed unanimously at a conference of disability groups and to hear what ministers had to say in response to the widespread charges that Government policy is bearing disproportionately on the disabled.

It may also be news to those local authorities who have reduced the home help service or introduced charges for the formerly free service. The London borough of Redbridge, which introduced new charges last April, conducted a survey after it became clear that a

large number of elderly and disabled people had now cancelled the service.

The survey, which has not yet been published, showed that 42 of the 130 people who replied had cancelled the service immediately the charges were imposed. Only three were aged under 70 and only eight were not receiving supplementary benefit.

Ministers have responded to publicity about the plight of people receiving supplementary benefit by advising local authorities that they should not charge them for home help services. Redbridge has now recommended that people receiving supplementary benefit or who are disabled should be exempt from such charges.

The effects on disabled people of cuts or charges in the home help service was one of the main reasons for disability groups coming together to employ Mrs Keeble. They argue that imposing charges for essential services on disabled people who cannot afford to pay is effectively withdrawing the service from them.

They cite legal opinion that once a need has been identified under the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act, 1970, it must be met by the responsible council. Mrs Keeble has so far persuaded a number of councils to change their minds, for example by installing a stairlift for a child when the authority had spent the money on a different person. But a number of cases remain on her files and will be taken to court if the councils concerned prove intransigent.

The ministers' statements are bound to strengthen the resolve of disability organizations in insisting on no cuts for disabled people.   
Pat Healy  
Social Services Correspondent

## A GANG OF UNLIKELY HEROES

Among the attractive characteristics of Americans is their persistent self-questioning. They are never sure that they are doing things right, always keen to monitor their performance.

That explains why the very first question asked at last week's press conference for most of the freed hostages was from a reporter who wondered whether he and his colleagues, in their anxiety to be first and best with the news, had overdone it.

It was, in a sense, pathetic. Here was the first formal public appearance by men and women who had been occupying the headlines, from their inaccessible confinement, for the best part of 15 months.

We should have been bursting with questions about their ordeal. Yet the first was not about them but about us, the reporters. How do you think we are doing?

By any previous standard the press had overdone it. Hundreds of reporters, trailing electronic gadgetry, had bounded the victims from Algiers to Wiesbaden to West Point to Washington.

No expense had been spared. For their arrival on American soil at Stewart airport in New York state, a portable satellite

dish had been erected on a hillside to beam the distant, partially obscured by a fuel truck—to a breathless world. Answering that first news conference question, Bruce Laing, the charge d'affaires at the embassy, said the press had been "challenged" and added: "We have no apprehensions about dealing with the press."

Indeed, many of the hostages ignored the barriers which officials had placed between them and reporters. At both Wiesbaden and West Point they voluntarily offered themselves for interviews.

What we often forget as we covered the story was that most of the hostages were diplomats, used to being more or less in the public eye and trained to acquit themselves well. Mr Laing pointed that out at the press conference when he described himself and his colleagues as the "embassy in exile".

It was one of those casual remarks which suddenly illuminates a new area of consideration. People whose faces we knew only from photographs taken in captivity were suddenly fleshed out into real people with real jobs.

Hostage Bruce German became Bruce German, the

budget officer, sending memos to staff to cut their consumption of paper clips. Hostage John Graves was John Graves, the public relations officer, showing during the conference that he had not lost his talent for verbal obscurity. Hostage Thomas Schaefer was the air attaché, doing whatever mysterious things such functionaries do.

They sat there, in three tiered rows on the stage of the Eisenhower Auditorium, behind tables covered with light blue cloth, looking like contestants in some grossly expanded edition of *University Challenge*. Following the train of thought inspired by Mr Laing, it was possible to appreciate what a highly unlikely set of heroes they are.

Diplomats are hardly anyone's favourite people, except those of other diplomats. In the United States especially they are regarded as a privileged and probably idle gang who feed at the public trough and see exotic places at government expense.

Did not President Reagan, after all, gain power partly on a programme of slashing federal spending and the bureaucracy? And was not his very first executive act symbolic of that pledge, when he signed an order



forbidding any new hirings in the federal service? Indeed, he boasted of it when he greeted the hostages, saying it was a reason why they were needed back in their old jobs.

Yet because of their long ordeal, these people had deservedly been forgiven for being part of the free-spending federal government machine. Most were clearly enjoying their unfamiliar heroic status almost as much as they enjoyed meeting their nearest and dearest at that peculiar old hotel up at West Point.

The second moment of illumination during this last crowded week came from a tele-

vision commentator. To fill in time between shots of sobbing hostages and their relatives on the south lawn of the White House, he recalled that the last time there had been so much weeping on that lawn had been in November, 1977, when police used tear gas against a crowd of noisy demonstrators protesting at the visit to Washington of the Shah of Iran.

It would not be right to say that relations between Iran and the United States had come full circle since then, but the remark did point up a neat symmetry. Tears at the beginning, tears at the end and tears for many months in between.

Of the millions of words to have been written about the hostages and about relations with Iran in the past fortnight, some of the most interesting came from the pen of one of the hostages, the same Mr Laing. On the day Mr Reagan greeted them on the south lawn, the *New York Times* published a memorandum to the State Department which Mr Laing had signed, in August, 1979, on the subject of negotiating with Iran.

Probably a composite work by several of the embassy staff, the memorandum analysed traits in the Iranians' character which made them hard to

deal with. "Perhaps the single dominant aspect of the Persian psyche is an overriding egotism", it said.

Its antecedents lie in the long Iranian history of instability and insecurity which put a premium on self-preservation. The practical effect of it is an almost total preoccupation with self and leaves little room for understanding points of view other than one's own.

The Persian experience has been that nothing is permanent and it is commonly perceived that hostile forces abound. In such an environment each individual must be constantly alert for opportunities to protect himself against the malevolent forces that would otherwise be his undoing. He is obviously justified in using almost any means available to exploit such opportunities."

Those observations turned out painfully prophetic. With hindsight, somebody in the State Department or the White House should have digested them and given them weight when assessing the likelihood that the decision to admit the Shah for medical treatment here might put American representatives in Tehran in danger. When asked to comment on this at the press conference, John Limbert, the political

officer at the embassy, gave a wry answer: "When you're in the embassy in Tehran, or wherever, it seems... that you always know better what Washington should do. This is natural among foreign service officers."

The self-questioning that is following their release, now that the euphoria is waning, is not about who was to blame initially nor even about whether the press was guilty of excess. It is about the more fundamental question of whether the deal by which they were freed was or was not shameful.

The division between hawks and doves has a depressing familiarity to those who remember the debate over Vietnam. The hawks say the deal amounted to bargaining with terrorists and should be disregarded by the new Administration.

The doves say the important thing was that the hostages were released alive and that it is now in America's strategic interest to pursue good relations with whatever authority exists in Iran. Mr Reagan is taking a circumspect position. In his speech of welcome to the hostages he employed the rhetoric of the hawks, yet he is acting like a dove in adhering to the terms of President Carter's agreement.

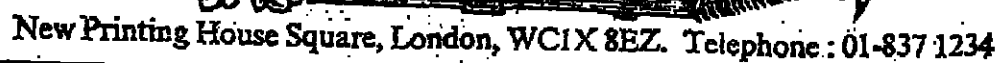
Once again we have to look to the "stages" of the conference for a nugget of wisdom. Victor Tomseth, the embassy's senior political officer, said: "If we look beyond the rhetoric... we do see that there is a far more commonality in previous terrorist incidents except those that have ended tragically."

During the crisis, the stress placed by the press on the paramount importance of the hostages' safe return made it virtually impossible for the Government to assert any other priority, even had they wanted to.

The tumultuous reaction to their return last week—the ribbons, the banners, the parades—was a celebration of the triumph of humanity and vindication of Washington's policy of patience. Those who advocated a tougher line might reflect that they would have been playing their *republican* games with other people's lives.

In that the press focused the Government's mind on the primacy of the humanitarian aspect of the crisis, they can share some of the credit for the final happy conclusion. Another, unlikely gang of heroes.   
Michael Leapman





would prove to be the most popular  
and appropriate retirement present  
of all?  
Yours faithfully,  
**PATRICK H. KEMP,**  
Round Hill Lodge,  
Docker Road, Woking, Surrey.







# Telecommunications in the Arab world

In 20 years the evocative date of 2001 will have been reached, Robert Bailey writes. Sociologists and economists in the Middle East at that time may well look back and decide that the most significant regional events in the last quarter of the twentieth century related to telecommunication.

The full application of current technology is already evident in some Arab states. A foreign exchange dealer in the Gulf is able to view on a television screen instantaneously the same information that is available to his counterpart in London, Tokyo or New York. Elsewhere in the area, Saudi Arabia can boast of one of the world's most advanced telecommunications developments. There is not a single country in the Middle East that has not already made, or is planning, significant investments in telecommunications systems to improve telephone, telegraph, television, radio, and data links.

It represents massive investment as well as big business which shows no sign of slowing down. The fact that the second Middle East Telecommunications Show and Conference, now being held at the Exhibition Centre in Bahrain is 15 per cent larger than the 1979 event, illustrates the amount of international interest in the market.

Travellers in the Middle East can point to wide disparities in quality and complexity of present services. A businessman in Bahrain may be able to call his bank in Zurich from his car telephone. In contrast, the visiting executive in Cairo, more often than not, will find he cannot even obtain a connection across the city.

There are moves towards a more evenly-balanced and regionally cohesive telecommunications development. Overall in the region \$30,000m is expected to be spent on telecommunications in the next 10 years, but there is a need to get the best systems for the job and value for money.

The 21 member countries of the Arab League, with Ethiopia, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece, Malta and Turkey, are linked in future network planning by the United Nations International Telecommunication Union (ITU).

Since its formation in 1945, the Arab League has been the main unifying force in Middle East telecommunications development. Through it the Arab Telecommunications Union was formed in 1958. The latter

aims to organize and improve its members' telecommunications through the ITU by standardizing systems, reducing tariffs, maintaining quality of services and encouraging cooperation among post, telegraph and telephone authorities. An Arab Broadcasting Union was set up in 1969, one result of which was the establishment of an Arab television news exchange in 1973.

However, the most significant cooperative step was taken nine years ago when several governments in the region requested financial and technical help from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to set up a regional network embracing the Middle East and Mediterranean basin.

The UNDP agreed to provide as much as 50 per cent of the capital for the project while the Geneva-based ITU has provided the technical assistance. Surveys working towards a master plan have had to consider a number of factors. These include the amount of traffic, location of national and international networks, economic and social development, transmission systems, switching, routing channels, broadcasting and data transmission needs.

In September, 1978, the master plan was approved by the sponsoring governments. These are grouped in six sub-regions with some countries included in more than one. The first includes Djibouti, Ethiopia, Saudi Arabia, Somalia and the two Yemens. The second comprises Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE. The third grouping includes Cyprus, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Syria and Turkey. The fourth comprises Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Sudan while the fifth includes Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece, Libya, Malta, Turkey and Yugoslavia. The sixth is made up of Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania and Tunisia.

A feature of the master plan is that it is based on diversifying routing to increase reliability of net-

works. Though close collaboration is entailed, in a region not noted historically for cooperation, the potential rewards are impressive. Some 30 million further telephone lines and 300,000 extra telegraph lines are expected by 1990.

The master plan has been reviewed at ITU headquarters from January 26 to 29. Muhammad Mili of Tunisia, ITU's secretary-general, has given warning previously: "The situation of telecommunications is evolving at an extremely rapid pace with the result that, if the implementation contained in the master plan is not constantly updated, it is liable to become useless and irrelevant very quickly."

The plan is already being carried out. A microwave network was decided on by a meeting of countries in sub-region one, Djibouti, in 1979. In 1980 surveys were carried out for microwave and submarine cable links between Safage in Egypt and Dubai in Saudi Arabia. A route for microwave communications between Aswan in Egypt and Wadi Halfa in Sudan has also been investigated by ITU staff, while submarine cable connections across the Mediterranean were also studied in 1980.

The ITU estimates that \$3,000m, 10 per cent of the total investment, will be spent on just the international part of the network. When completed it will cover 28 countries and extend over 8,000km from the Atlantic Ocean to the Indian Ocean and to the Black Sea.

While its smooth execution will do much to further Arab unity, the investment focus continues to be very much on purely national developments. Saudi Arabia has already started putting into effect plans to enhance its \$2,000m digital electronic telephone system, provided by L. M. Ericsson of Sweden and Philips of The Netherlands and managed by Bell Canada, Egypt, which is spending \$1,800m on rebuilding its antiquated telephone network, seems to have decided on analogue rather than the newer digital exchanges for its new system.

The contractors, led by Siemens of West Germany, do not rule out the possibility that at later stages of the Egyptian programme digital technology will be applied. The latter is, in telecommunications terms, the cordon bleu recipe for improvement. Whether areas

like the Middle East really need to buy the latest technology, when a previous generation of well proved and adequate equipment is available for the work, is a moot point.

Something that has been around for some time is microwave communications and it is playing a significant role in Middle East developments. Once again, the most spectacular application is seen in Saudi Arabia. The \$400m Intra-Kingdom Microwave Project, carried out by Western Electric of the United States and completed in 1979, extends over 6,200 miles.

Three hundred radio-relay microwave transmission towers have been erected the length and breadth of Saudi Arabia. The system provides 35,000 long-distance telephone circuits as well as telex, data and television channels. Another microwave communications link put into effect by Telettra of Italy has been put in between Jebel Dukhah near Taif in Saudi Arabia and Jebel Erba near Port Sudan. The 213-mile link across the Red Sea is the longest line-of-sight radio hop in the world. The newer telecommunications techniques have provided valuable assistance in a number of Arab developments. An American company, the AILtech division of Cutler-Hammer's instruments and systems group, provided a \$17.8m traffic management system for the Suez Canal Authority.

The system involves placing Loran radio transmitters on ships as they start their passage through the canal. The device automatically determines its position by analysing signals from special Loran transmitters. Ships' movements are shown on display systems in harbour control offices. The transmitter is taken off the ship when it completes its journey through the waterway and placed on a ship going in the opposite direction.

Telecommunications technology is also important in airport developments. Saudi Arabian Airlines (Saudia) uses an automatic reservations system linked to computers in British Airways' West London terminal. Circuits are provided on the Saudi Arabian telecommunications backbone network to provide data links to Saudia offices in Riyadh and Dhahran. The airline is also linked to Alitalia's maintenance and engineering management information system

(MEMIS) computer in Rome.

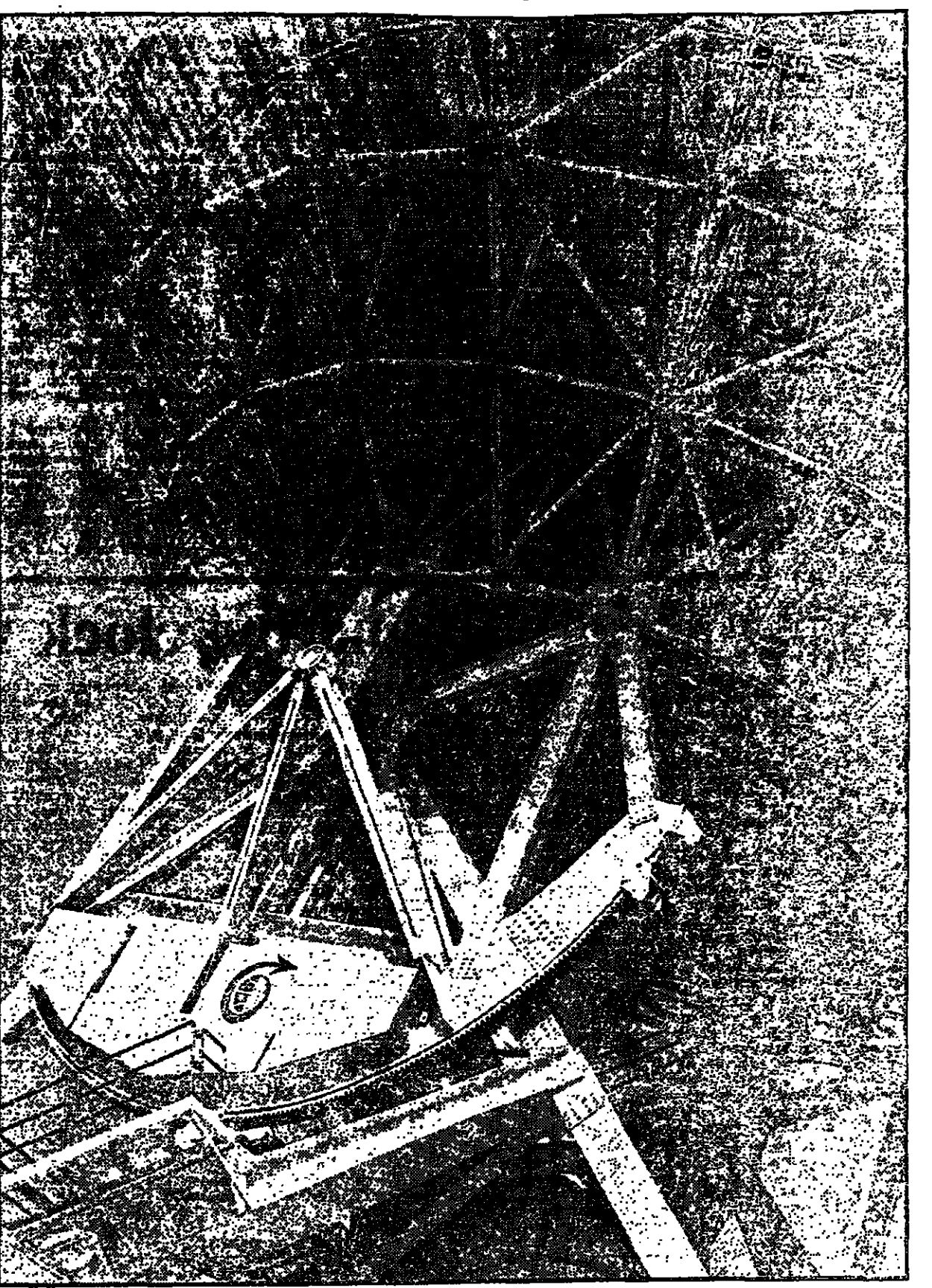
Data links are growing in importance in the region. Ten Arab airlines are planning to take part in a \$30m to \$40m Bahrain-based central computerized reservation system. The participants are Gulf Air, Saudia, Alia, the Royal Jordanian Airline, Kuwait Airways, Middle East Airlines, Syrian Arab Airlines, Libyan Arab Airlines, Democratic Yemen Airlines, Comair, Yemen Airways and Sudan Airways. The system is expected to handle 10 million reservations a year. The fact that such systems are being actively considered is a measure of how quickly telecommunications services are growing.

The long-awaited development of the Arab satellite communications project (Arabsat) will undoubtedly be a major spur to the exchange of information in the region. The ambitious project is intended to have two orbiting satellites providing telephone and television links for Arab countries. Much of the extended delay regarding Arabsat involves argument on who is qualified to supply equipment according to boycott rules and who will control the system.

Some consider that after all the bickering the main investor, Saudi Arabia, will at some stage take over responsibility for the whole project. Arabsat, apart from providing ordinary television transmission links, could also be used to offer educational broadcasts to small rural communities. This is a necessary consideration as about 70 per cent of the entire population in the Arab world is illiterate.

In any event television broadcasting continues to grow steadily in the region. A number of countries have a choice of two programmes and sometimes, as in Dubai, three. A few countries, such as Algeria, manufacture television sets. Most electronic items, both consumer and professional, are imported in the Middle East. Iraq, however, has plans to set up an electronics industry to make as yet undisclosed equipment. Syria is starting up a factory to produce E-10 digital electronic telephone exchanges under licence from CIT-Alcatel of France. Demands for technology transfer can only realistically be met when a country can

continued on page 19



Jill Brown

## AXE: the facts and the future.



In the digital switching market, choosing a system may still seem a difficult problem. So many systems exist, so many of them are still in an early development stage—with little more than large promises to back them.

There is one system, however, which is rapidly becoming a world switching favourite—AXE, from Ericsson. A system so powerful, elegant and flexible that it has changed the perspective of most manufacturers and telephone administrations in the world. Today it is obvious that basic AXE features like functional modularity, software security and handling-cost minimisation are being recognised as fundamental requirements on modern switching systems.

### Unparalleled success

In the short time since it was introduced, AXE has met with a success unparalleled in the history of telephony. More than three hundred exchanges with a total of three million lines have been contracted for 25 countries. In 13 of these countries, AXE exchanges are already actually in service.

Local production is established in six countries, and under way in a further seven—another measure of the successful development of AXE into a fully operational, manageable system, with comprehensive documentation and extensive support.

### Towards the future

Such astounding success does not mean that the development of AXE is over and done with. On the contrary—it brings with it an obligation to protect the investments of our customers.

This protection is accomplished by a continuous development plan and a steady flow of added features and functions. The unique functional modularity of AXE means there is no end or limit to this process.

In fact, the uniquely effective AXE system structure allows for future advances in both component and system technologies.

A powerful digital group switch, for example, was incorporated in AXE almost from the beginning. Now, recent advances in component technology allow us to offer digital subscriber stages as well, completing the first major step in the long-term development plan of AXE.

### Why not choose the best?

AXE is clearly ahead today, and its continuous enrichment makes it very difficult for any other system ever to match its advantages. In five years' time there will be just one better digital switching system than today's AXE—AXE with five years' enrichment.

The conclusion is clear: when there's a choice, choose the best.

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## TELECOMMUNICATIONS IN THE ARAB WORLD

## Europe has edge in the market over US competitors

European companies have achieved considerable success in Middle East telecommunications markets during the past three years mostly at the cost of major United States rivals. This has been because of a variety of factors of which skilful marketing techniques, availability of advanced technology and probably politics have been important.

The growing European competitiveness has been shown particularly by the success of Swedish, Dutch, French and West German companies. Since 1977 they have won the two largest telecommunications orders awarded in Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

L. M. Ericsson of Sweden and Philips of The Netherlands together with Bell Canada were awarded a turnkey contract to provide 70,000 additional lines for the Saudi Arabian telephone system in December, 1977.

Bell Canada's role is the training of Saudi staff to operate the new system and to maintain it in the interim period.

The negotiation of turnkey packages is often long and complicated, particularly in areas of the world where there is no previous example to draw on for the introduction of new technology. It is a problem felt by both the customer and the supplier.

Bidding for the Saudi Arabian TEP (telephone expansion programme) was not close. There was a difference of more than \$1,200m between the ITT-led bid of \$3,400m and the tender submitted by the successful consortium.

Another unsuccessful United States bid came from Western Electric which led a United Kingdom group including Plessey, British Insulated Callender's Cables and Cable & Wireless. Its bid was costed at £2,942m. Bell Canada had to bid for its training and maintenance

contract against Western Electric and a consortium of United Telecommunications and ITT. The latter's bid reportedly was four times that of Bell Canada's.

Even though a letter of intent was only sent to the Dutch, Swedish, and Canadian consortium after its submission was evaluated by consultants from Arthur D. Little, Norconsult, Swedtel, Preece Cardew & Rider and the International Telecommunications Union, the loss of the order was a bitter defeat for the United States companies, notably ITT.

Its proposal was described by the consultants as "having been very thorough and good, but they did a lot of hedging, and their prices were high on training and maintenance".

Western Electric was awarded a \$408m contract in the same year against services. Another 7,000 Saudis are employed by the organization, representing about 63 per cent of all staff.

Saudi Arabia's third five-year plan includes further substantial development plans for telecommunications. The same year, against services, 480,000 telephone lines will be added to the national network, bringing the line capacity to more than a million.

Telecom lines will be doubled to 30,000. The microwave network is to be developed as well as communications services with neighbouring countries. Together these plans are likely to mean as much or more capital investment as in the previous years, but highly progressive five years.

The wish throughout the Middle East is to provide modern telecommunications systems. In marketing terms, however, nothing is clear cut. The carefully worded public relations statements record the achievements but

hide or nothing of the inevitable and usually unforeseen difficulties that arise in working in a developing country. Salesmen in the international telecommunications market are expert at analysing any potential weakness, either technical or commercial, in a rival's position. It is not surprising therefore that companies are reluctant

to discuss their contracts in any great detail. This reticence, and the apparently continuing success of European companies over United States rivals, has been seen in Egypt. Responsibility for carrying out a \$1,800m programme to re-vitalize the Egyptian telecommunications system was awarded to a consortium led by Siemens of West Germany in September, 1979.

The news was widely acclaimed as a coup for the West German company. Siemens, Siemens Österreich and Thomson-CSF are to carry out a five-year programme involving the installation of 500,000 telephone lines which will bring the total network to 750,000 lines. In the first phase Siemens will install six exchanges in Cairo providing 120,000 lines and Thomson-CSF will supply nine exchanges with 80,000 lines for the Zagazig, Tanta and Mansoura areas of the Nile Delta.

The contract awarded to the Siemens consortium was another that was plucked from under the noses of United States companies which had been widely expected to be the leader in Egypt's telecommunications improvement programme.

The financial package, a combination of Franco-German aid and guaranteed buyers' credit, was superior to that offered elsewhere. However, there seems to be some bedding over longer term plans by the customer, the Arab Republic of Egypt. National Telecommunications Organization (Arento) As in Saudi Arabia, the country's initial development, while huge, may be only the precursor to future more valuable work.

Instead of demanding the latest digital electronic exchange equipment, Arento has specified well proved, but less advanced and presumably less costly, analogue

electronic switching equipment. In 1979 Mr Ali Fahimi al-Daghastani, Egypt's Minister, said the telecommunications authority was determined not to become locked into one system.

It is an interesting comment since United States companies will inevitably become more involved in Egypt's overall telecommunications improvement by virtue of \$180m that has been allocated by USAID for this purpose. There is no connection with the Siemens exercise. However, Conitel, Telephone, which drew up a master plan in 1978 to improve Egypt's telephone system over a 20-year period, has, together with Arthur D. Little, a USAID-funded \$20.5m contract to supply managerial and technical advice to Arento.

It must be particularly galling for United States companies in North America to see a paragon of telecommunications technology in the Middle East.

There is no guarantee that European firms and consortiums can, in the long term, maintain their present dominance in any part of the Middle East. American salesmen and their companies do not accept failure easily and the market for telecommunications in the region is too massive and potentially rewarding for any international company to withdraw from it.

That such powerful competition for orders is so firmly established between North American, European and Far Eastern firms, must be to the advantage of Middle East buyers whose technical ability to seek and demand value for money is increasing.

Robert Bailey  
Middle East  
Economic Digest

## Round the clock watch maintained in secrecy

Talk of Saudi Arabia acquiring airborne warning and control systems (AWACS) would probably have been dismissed as a joke a year ago. Today, with the increasing desire (and a pressing need) to install modern defence systems, most types of equipment can be considered.

Modern armed forces are those which have the benefit of advanced technology. Application of such technology allows an integration of many complex systems which provide intelligence, fire-power, logistic ability and above all communications.

The four AWACS aircraft the United States sent to Saudi Arabia shortly after the war between Iran and Iraq began last September, and which the Saudis want to buy, are providing round-the-clock surveillance of the combatants' aircraft movements.

A continuing difficulty faced by Third World countries when they acquire technologically advanced equipment is that of providing the trained men necessary for both operation and maintenance.

The essential weakness is often the inability to overhaul, repair and modify equipment and to make frequently needed spare parts.

A lack of expert capability in handling modern military communication systems has been displayed by both Iran and Iraq during the present fighting.

At specialist events such as the British Army Equipment Exhibition up to 25 per cent of the equipment on show relates to some form of telecommunications and electronics. Most major electronics companies in the world have at least some military sales. The Middle East is a lucrative but intensely competitive market for exports. Because of fears of upsetting actual and potential customers few contracts are reported or discussed.

Before the revolution defence salesmen made Tehran the first stop on any regional itinerary. After the end of the Shah's regime attention has concentrated on Arab countries for defence purchases. That these are increasing is in no small measure due to Iran's

changed, and as yet undefined, conception of its role in the region.

Many of the ambitious plans of the Shah, which on paper at least would have made Iran the dominant regional power, have been abandoned. One of the first acts of the revolutionary government was to cancel plans to acquire seven AWACS aircraft and to develop the multi-million dollar Irbex surveillance and communications system.

The war between Iran and Iraq has added to uncertainties felt in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states about their own abilities to defend themselves in particular against air attacks launched against oil installations on land and offshore. An integrated air defence system has yet to emerge in the area.

One important question is which countries would be included. It is technically feasible to link the radar systems of the various states which might wish to pool their resources. Radar used at airports for control of civilian air traffic often has military applications as well. Among several interna-

tional companies marketing radar, Plessey of the United Kingdom has been particularly successful in The Gulf.

Kuwait, Ras al Khaymah in the United Arab Emirates and Sib in Oman are equipped with the company's 80 nautical mile range AR15 radar system. Bahrain, Abu Dhabi and Dubai have bought Plessey's 200 nautical mile range AR5.

Saudi Arabia is the logical leader in any Gulf air defence system. Its nationwide air traffic control system is well advanced. This is being provided by Lockheed Aircraft Corporation of the United States under a \$627m contract. Collins and ITT, also of the United States, are sub-contractors, as well as Marconi of the United Kingdom. Marconi is the primary supplier of radar for the development Control centres are being established at both Jiddah and Riyadh; they will function in a similar way to the massive joint military and civilian air traffic control centre at West Droyton near London.

Some 3D radar has undoubtedly been installed in Saudi Arabia and elsewhere

in the Middle East. The 3D type is essentially a military radar system providing long-distance coverage of aircraft, including height as well as speed and bearing. There are several levels of complexity in military radar related to electronic counter measures (ECM) capability. One of the newest is the Marconi Martello radar system with a detection range of 300 miles at heights of 100,000 ft.

Westinghouse of the United States has supplied Saudi Arabia with three AN TPS 43 3D mobile radar systems, and an agreement was disclosed in 1978 to provide Sudan with six of them under a \$78m contract. Another AN TPS 43 system has recently been dispatched to Saudi Arabia to accompany the four United States AWACS aircraft. It is a lightweight and transportable radar system which can provide 3D coverage to a range of 240 nautical miles.

Saudi Arabia is now the main market for all types of both military and civilian electronics in the Middle East. A radio communications system, being installed by International Aeradio of

the United Kingdom, will eventually allow communications with any aircraft flying over the kingdom—as the size of Western Europe.

Ground-based communications are also emphasized in Saudi plans. American company Litton Industries has a \$1,640m contract to provide a national communications system. Little has been revealed about the type of equipment to be installed or its purposes.

Much of the work involves improving the Armed Forces' military communications system, enabling it to be linked to the civilian network and airports. One \$73.5m sub-contract awarded to Aydin Corporation of the United States by Litton calls for the supply of tropospheric scatter microwave communications system.

Computer Science Corporation of the United States has a \$221m contract to supply a national computer information system. An official data bank will have branch offices in Jiddah, Dammam, Banda, Tabuk, Arara, Abha

and Taif. Another 700 subsidiary data links will enable any department of the Interior Ministry and the public security service to retrieve information from the central computer system.

For the navy, the electronic warfare specialist company, Tracor of Texas, is supplying engineering support services for the American port of Saudi Arabia's big ships and training expansion programme. There are also important developments being carried out for Saudi Arabia's army and National Guard. The latter is a 35,000-strong force, recruited from tribes fiercely loyal to the regime, and charged with the defence of the capital, Riyadh, and the oil fields.

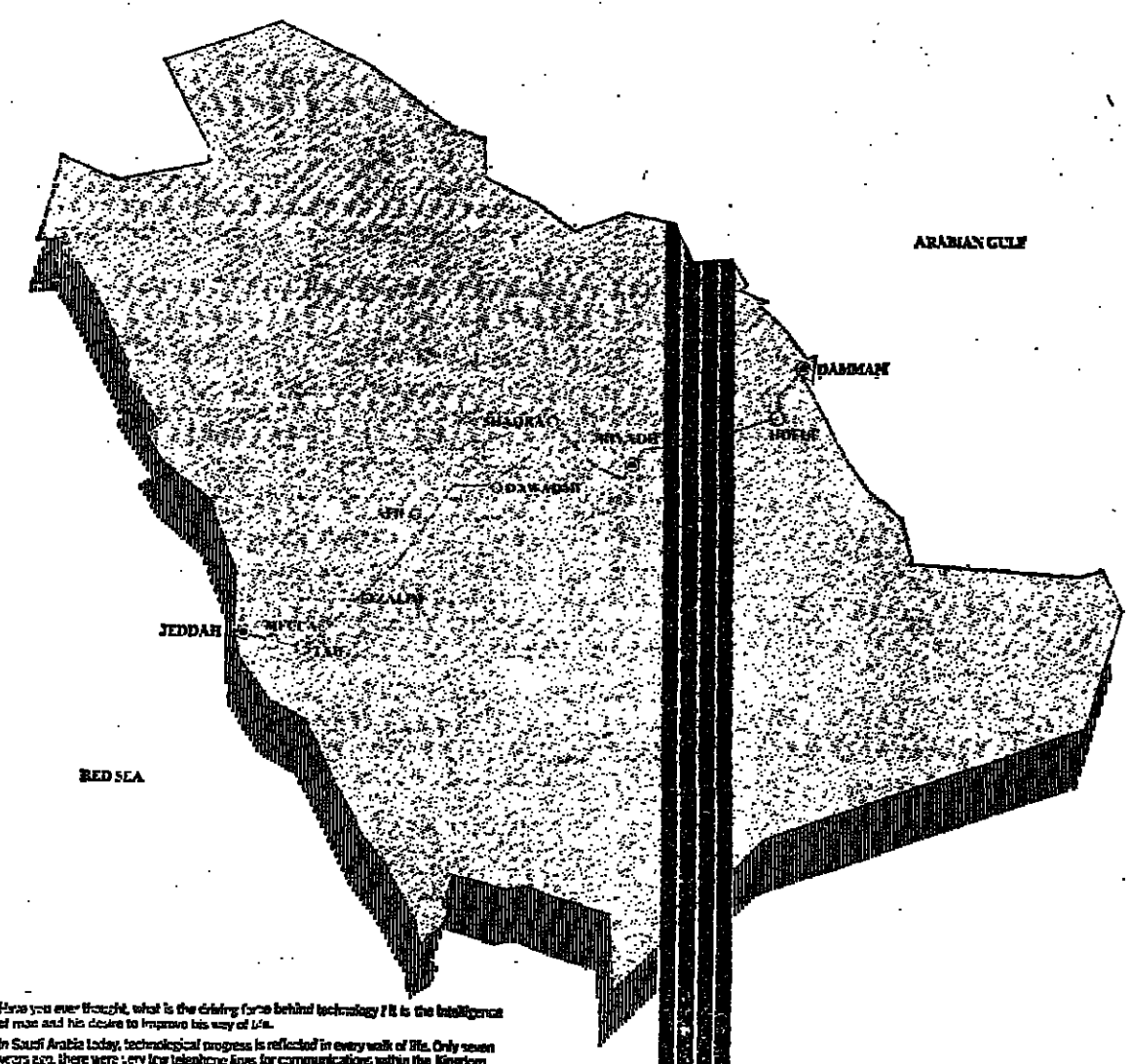
Early in 1980 the United Kingdom government agency International Military Services negotiated a contract worth an estimated \$225m for a group of British companies to supply artillery electronics support equipment to the Saudi army. Among the companies involved are Marconi Space & Defence Systems, EMI, Ferranti, Tellurimeter and Fairley Engineering.

Cable & Wireless of the United Kingdom is the prime contractor for a complete telecommunications network for the National Guard. The contract was said to be worth more than £200m when it was awarded through Britain's Ministry of Defence in 1978. In its last annual report Cable & Wireless said that extensions to the system had been awarded, increasing the scale and scope of the work. This was now proceeding satisfactorily, although the project had suffered some delay "while operational details were determined", the company said.

Big investment in military communications is also being made elsewhere in the Middle East. The British company Racal was reported to be negotiating in 1980 a \$113m order to supply the United Arab Emirates' 12,000 UHF and single side band communications equipment. Plessey Avionics & Communications is believed to have an order worth \$60m to supply HF and UHF tactical radios for Iraq's army.

R.B.

## Technology is our tomorrow.



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JEDDAH RIYADH DAMMAM

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2072

Have you ever thought what is the driving force behind technology? It is the intelligence of man and his desire to improve his way of life. In Saudi Arabia today, technological progress is reflected in every walk of life. Only seven years ago, there were very few telephone lines for communication within the Kingdom. Today, all major cities are connected through the direct dialling system.

SAITELCO, Saudi Arabian Telecommunications Corporation, played a significant role in this achievement. It has developed and installed the Kingdom's telecommunications system. The same system which enables Saudi Arabia to communicate with the rest of the world. Why not join us?

SAITELCO can provide its expertise to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and to other countries for providing them with the opportunity to experience the Kingdom in the field of telecommunications.

Advances in telecommunications technology are being widely exploited in the Arab world, to the particular advantage of industry and commerce.

The capability for information storage and data processing in the new generation of digital communication equipment; the improvements in telecommunication equipment like the relative silence of electronic equipment; the readiness with which mobile telephone networks can be operated (as already in Bahrain); the likelihood of videophone services becoming available later in this decade and offering a credible alternative to the personal contact so valued in Arab business relations—all these are examples of telecommunications expansion and technological advancement having an increasing impact on Arab business.

Another example is the increasing use of facsimile transmission, in which Muirhead, the data transmission company of Beckenham, Kent, is involved. In dealing with business documents facsimile transmission not only eliminates the possibility of telex keying errors but can present an authentic document complete with signature that the businessman receiving it can be sure of.

This has led to an increasing demand in the Arab countries according to Mr Brian Bardwell, Muirhead's telecommunications marketing manager. More also want facsimile equipment with the security element of encryption equipment which "scrambles" the electronic data during transmission, ensuring security on confidential business information.

This is the rosy side of the picture for the role telecommunications is playing in Arab industrial and commercial development. But lack of the right telecommunications has had its debit side. Egypt's ramshackle telecommunications system on which action is at last being taken—largely scuttled its chances of becoming the commercial centre of the Arab world when Lebanon's civil strife

deposed Beirut from that position. Bahrain, then with the most mature telecommunications systems in the region, lost its lead in the telecommunications race—sharing particularly the growth of banking activity.

It is an illustration of how necessary are good telecommunications to a nation's industrial and commercial development. Local, regional

and international communications, both efficient and competitively priced, are needed as much by industrial companies as by service sectors—like tourism, banking, the stock markets and insurance.

War-torn Lebanon, as well as being faced with the damage from military activities, marked time in the telecommunications race, leaving Beirut with a big telecommunications backlog. This had to be tackled if it were to have any hope of regaining its place as a leading business and financial centre.

Lebanon now has plans for modernizing and expanding its telecommunications network, with France having the country's Reconstruction and Development Council a \$53.7m loan for telecommunications work—benefiting mainly French suppliers, with recent orders for 23 electronic telephone exchanges going to the Electricite group.

There was also a World Bank loan to Lebanon last year of \$15m for repairing war damage to the telecommunications network. In the first quarter of 1980, 4,000 new telephone lines were installed, as many as were put in during the previous three years or more.

Altogether 30,000 new lines were installed in the 12 months to last August when four additions to Beirut's own telephone exchange were opened. Plans for this year include setting up international telex lines and semi-automatic exchanges for more than 9,000 lines in the Basrah area and 16,000 lines in the Shatoura and Zabla areas.

Beirut will nevertheless not easily regain the commercial centre crown because there is a new drive for expansion in telecommunications among the oil-rich states, as well as its other problems, is getting outside aid so are other non-oil producing Arab states for financing the development of basic services, of which telecommunications are a key component.

The attempts of the oil-rich states to create an industrial base against the time that the oil runs out are bearing fruit, after a period of faltering which is adding to the need for better telecommunications.

Saudi Arabia's third five-year plan is notable for its commitment to press on with a modernization programme based essentially on rapid industrialization. Heavy industry schemes, including several large petro-

chemical complexes, are due to start operating from 1984, built at the new industrial cities of Jubail on The Gulf and the newly-opened Yanbu on the Red Sea.

Although Saudi Arabia has probably the most advanced telecommunications network of any of the Arab nations its third five-year plan to 1985 calls for nearly another 500,000 telephone lines—bringing the total to more than a million—with an extra 3,000 telex lines due to go in, bringing the total to 30,000 by 1985.

Development of telecommunications links with other Arab countries are also covered in the plan which should enhance facilities for pan-Arab business.

Industrial developments are proliferating in The Gulf now that investment spending is reviving after a few years of retrenchment which followed the overheating of so many Arab economies. In Abu Dhabi a number of large engineering projects in hydrocarbons are being pursued and in Oman there is a \$20,000m five-year plan which starts next January that will have a widespread effect on the local economy.

Communications, generally and defence, both involving telecommunications, get the biggest single allocations under the plan.

Even Bahrain, long declining as an oil producer and increasingly reliant on its expanding commercial, particularly banking, sector, has been attracting projects for petrochemicals production and iron pelletizing. An aluminium rolling mill, a participation project involving the Gulf states, will probably be situated in Bahrain.

The Iran-Iraq war appears to have had only a short-term damping effect on the drive to industrialization which is resuming in Iraq. Iraq's five-year plan 1985, with expenditure likely to reach about \$75,000m, will include setting up industrial plants to exploit the country's mineral wealth in gypsum, glass, sand, lead, iron ore and copper.

Telecommunications expansion has to go hand in hand with such developments. In Iraq France's Thomson-CSF has already won communications contracts valued at more than \$300m and another, worth about \$958m, is in the wings for setting up an electronics industry.

Oman's response has been to announce a five-year expenditure on telecommunications of more than \$182m which will not only substantially improve the telephone system but in the first phase expand a telex system that is particularly useful to industrial and commercial users. Businessmen will also be able to dial direct out of Salalah.

Algeria provides another example of the way telecommunications expenditure is expanding alongside other spending on industrial sectors. Government investment in industrial sectors there up to 1984 is running at \$57,000m, while spending on telecommunications between 1980 and 1984 will be more than \$2,000m.

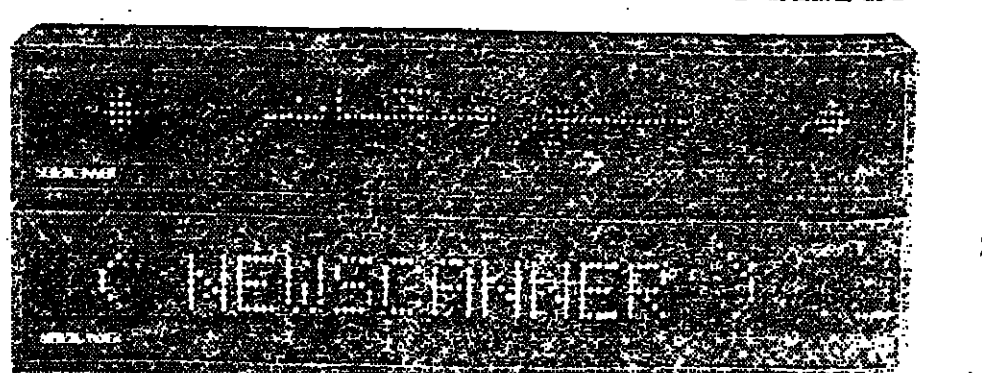
The much-needed rehabilitation, then expansion of Egypt's telecommunications network is finally proceeding under a 20-year plan that should bring the number of telephone lines to 4,330,000, with expansion of telex and other facilities, at an estimated cost of \$18,000m. A \$1,800m contract, already awarded, will improve the existing telephone network.

There are probably fewer than 400,000 lines compared with an estimated demand of 500,000 new lines, providing a network of 775,000 upgraded lines by 1984 when forecast demand is put at 1,500,000.

That will put Egypt at last on the road away from being perhaps the most frustrating place in the Arab world for businessmen needing the efficient telecommunications without which industry and commerce will never expand in the way the Arab world will increasingly need.

Derek Harris  
Commercial Editor

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## You can watch Muppets in Morocco

One side-effect of the increasing impact of television in Arab countries—part of the way telecommunication is radically changing Arab lifestyles—is that visiting British businessmen can often count on catching up with the latest needle matches in British football.

Although television programmes bought in from the West—largely the United States and Britain because of the second-language status of English in the Arab world—probably account for only 30 per cent of Arab television, programmes familiar to British eyes can seem comparatively frequent, from the Muppets to the BBC's Shakespearean series.

Most Arab towns are festooned with television aerials, indicating a high-density usage which will undoubtedly spread into rural areas once links can get the television signals there.

The cultural and educational impact, already considerable, will probably be at its most dramatic in such communities.

Nearly every Arab now has a radio but, apart from this, television is often the only main form of entertainment for a 'raily group'.

When the Arab Satellite Communication Organiza-

tion's Arabsat becomes operational even the most remote communities will be able to get, via small receiving stations, a wide range of programmes from news and entertainment to instructional and other educational programmes. Arabsat should also encourage more ready exchange of both television and radio material between Arab countries, a capability which the political optimism feel will help to ease some of the tensions between various Arab states.

Arabsat is planned to go into operation by 1984 and a decision is due on the prime contractor, with a number of bids of between \$100m and \$150m, still being evaluated, including one involving British Aerospace. The British company is in a consortium with France's Matra and Thomson-CSF.

In the same way that television is still largely available only in areas of large population density, the telephone network peters out rapidly outside the cities and towns even in those Arab countries which are in the van of telecommunications development.

Saudi Arabia's new five-year investment plans for telecommunications include not only an expansion of radio and television broadcasting but extensions of its so-called backbone coaxial cable system to the benefit of more rural areas and improvements to its domestic

satellite system. The satellite microwave system will bring many more rural areas within range of signals picked up on mobile stations, including border areas. Network capacity increases should get radio and television broadcasts to every corner of the kingdom, it is claimed.

Saudi Arabia, with its immense oil revenues, has been able to develop its communications at a pace that, best of any in the Arab world, comes nearest to meeting the needs of its people. The country's improvements in telecommunications have moved its telephone density sharply upwards. Yet it is still far behind the densities found in developed countries.

The number of telephones per 100 of the Saudi population was 2.4 in 1978 but could soon be about 10 per 100. The average for the Arab world is still little more than three per 100 compared with a world average of not much more than 15. Europe's 30 and the 80 to be found in highly developed industrial nations such as the United States.

Bahrain stands at about 22 per 100, Kuwait possibly 17, the United Arab Emirates over 20 and Qatar more than 15. But in Qatar, for instance, the number of telephones to each individual subscriber is as high as 20, indicating 'no doubt' the wealthier Arab's appetite for telecommunications gadgetry.

Even oil riches will not easily increase telephone density levels to anywhere near those found in the highly-industrialized countries. One estimate is that given that it costs about £2,000 for each new subscriber line installed in the Middle East, merely doubling the present density would cost well in excess of £100,000m. Yet, according to some consultancy opinion, Arab investment in telecommunications services over the next 10 years is likely to be at most £10,000m.

But drawing conclusions from these sorts of figures and the telephone exchange statistics does tend to leave

out of account the structure of Arab society. Even a comparatively low-density service, provided it is spread geographically, can have disproportionate effects on lifestyles.

In Libya, for instance, the densely populated industrial and commercial centres on the coast, notably at Tripoli and Benghazi, have attracted much of that population from the more rural areas inland. Those in the coastal strip have strong family links in the villages as much as 800 miles away in the desert.

Those family links are usually strong so that without any telephone contact at all there is a tendency to draw to the coastal strip more and more of that part of the family still in the hinterland. That could break up the essentially village basis of the Libyan way of life which is why the Government is making it a priority to bring telecommunications links quickly into even the most remote areas.

Progressively telephone links to the rural areas, largely by cable, will be pushed out from the coastal strip and there are also plans for ensuring that television and radio programmes reach even the most remote communities. In this way it is hoped to keep the population spread throughout the country without particularly weakening the family tie.

Similar moves to keep remote communities within the mainstream of national life can be seen in most other Arab countries. As well as Saudi spending on this sort of expansion, Iraq a contract worth about £30m has been let by the Transport and Communications Ministry for improving telephone services in rural areas. In Oman, under a five-year plan is under way to provide 24 fully automated exchanges and more than 22,000 new telephone lines. Many of the facilities will be for the benefit of remote areas hitherto without telephone links.

The problems of providing small telephone exchange systems for remote communities could prove an opportunity for United Kingdom export sales especially to lesser developed Arab countries, according to Mr John Boag, general manager of British Telecom, the British Post Office consultancy service.

Although Britain's System X digital system—the GEC, Plessey, STC, British Telecom project—is primarily designed for highly developed communities as in the industrialized countries, work is also going on to provide modern and economically operated installations for remote parts of Britain, particularly Scotland. The new system, which can be self-repairing when faults occur, are particularly useful in reducing maintenance costs in remote areas.

The new digital telephone systems now being increasingly favoured in the Arab world will mean that many Arabs will be enjoying the additional facilities offered probably before many in already developed countries. System X offers more than 30 facilities for domestic users, from automatic redialling of temporarily engaged numbers and re-routing of one's incoming calls to another number to giving the subscriber a morning wake-up call or even voice guidance on steps needed to make, say, an international call.

However far improvements in telecommunications, especially in remote areas, foster domestic cohesion within each Arab country, it remains to be seen how far the availability of television programmes especially will help the cause of Arab unity. Arabsat will tend to bring a narrowing of television programmes to within the country's geographical boundaries, but where other country's programmes can be picked up there could be scope for any propaganda war to be conducted on screen as well as—as already happens—over the radio wavebands. Nevertheless the advantage of improved telecommunications for the individual Arab must far outweigh this possible debit.

D.H.

## Middle Eastern markets lure Britain's manufacturers

Those prominent in the supply, manufacture and servicing of telecommunications equipment throughout the world will be exhibiting in Bahrain this week in the hope of acquiring a foothold in one of the most potentially lucrative markets in the world still free to open competition.

At least that is the theory. The Arab world, Africa, South America and parts of the Far East are the commercial jewels in the crown of the global telecommunications market being sought by most of the principal suppliers.

In theory the American market in telecommunications is open to any competitor but the commercial clout of companies can make it difficult for the smaller, more modest, operator.

The Japanese until recently have had no desire to allow their telecommunications equipment supply contracts in the public service industries to be open to foreign competition. A recent agreement between the

Americans and the Japanese may alter that balance but it is early days.

In Europe the markets have been controlled by the Post, Telephone and Telegraph Authorities (PTTs) of the respective countries. In Britain it is the Post Office, shortly to be split into Telecommunications and Posts and Giro.

The millions of pounds expected to be available in the Arab world as the countries develop their telecommunications are luring the world's manufacturers.

Saudi Arabia and Egypt are undoubtedly among the front runners in their efforts to modernize. Ericsson, Philips, Bell Canada and the nationalized telecommunications companies have picked up multi-million dollar contracts in Saudi Arabia and Egypt recently.

Invariably the politics of a particular government can colour its view of foreign competitors in the Arab market. On the whole American and European manufacturers and suppliers have done well, among them being Cable & Wireless, the American company Western Elec-

tric, Csi-Alcatel, Thomson-CSF of France and Siemens of Germany.

British Telecom will be prominent among the British contingent in Bahrain. The corporation's consultancy service, EPO Teleconsult, over the years has been gaining a reputation overseas for impartial judgments on telecommunications, despite its association with the Post Office (British Telecom) and its 224,000 managerial and technical staff.

All aspects of telecommunications will be displayed by it in Bahrain exhibiting the expertise available from the British Post Office which covers all the activities needed effectively to finance, operate, develop and maintain one of the world's largest communications systems.

The corporation is marketing the export knowledge much needed in the Arab world, which has been gained by operating one of the world's largest networks—25 million telephones, growing at the rate of a million a year—and supported by a staff of 120,000 engineers.

British Telecoms consult

sizes that it will recommend non-British equipment if it is the best for the job.

British Telecom will be showing the products that it has developed with the British telecommunications equipment manufacturers among them GEC, STC, Plessey and Plessey.

The new digital exchange equipment of British Telecom—System X—inaugurated in the United Kingdom last September in a London exchange will be marketed by British Telecom's Systems, a company jointly owned by British Telecom, Plessey, GEC and STC, the creators and manufacturers of the design.

Other Britons have high hopes, among them SIC showing general telecommunications equipment, Hawker Siddons showing power supplies, Racal Milgo with data communications equipment and the British arm of the Canadian company Mitel.

Bill Johnston

## Arabsat launch this decade

The sheer size of the Arab world makes it the ideal candidate to harness the technological advances being made in satellite and fibre optic communication.

The vast distances to be covered the extreme conditions in which the equipment is expected to function correctly and consistently, together with the provision requiring minimum maintenance, are all classic conditions in which to test the versatility of the new technologies.

The Arab states are no strangers to using satellites for communication.

Throughout the Arab world—Addis Ababa, Djibouti, Aden, Khartoum, Jeddah, Riyadh, Dubai, Kuwait, Tehran, Baghdad, Damascus and Amman—among others—earth stations link the respective telecommunications networks to the Intelsat complex of satellites around the globe.

The International Telecommunications Satellite Organization (Intelsat) was formed in 1964. The first satellite was put into orbit over the Atlantic in 1965. Since then there have been several more put into geostationary orbit 22,000 miles above the earth.

The latest, Intelsat V, was launched from Cape Canaveral in Florida on

December 4 and provided the most advanced technology available in satellite communication linking the Arab world by way of the Intelsat network to the United States.

The programme has 10 satellites in orbit around the world in geostationary positions over the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans.

Three were launched in 1967, four between 1968 and 1970 and the remainder over the next decade.

But the Arab world is looking closely at the idea of using satellite communication for local or regional communication instead of transatlantic or intercontinental communication.

The latest project is called Arabsat—a satellite to be launched about 1984 by the Arab Satellite Communication Organization with a capacity for 17,000 telephone channels and a further eight for television transmission.

The satellite will be substantial in size since Intelsat V has a capacity for 12,000 telephone channels and two television channels on simultaneous transmission. That satellite has twice the capacity of its predecessors.

About 1983-84 most of the European nations are involved in launching satellites from Cape Canaveral. The European contrac-

among the prime bidders for the Arabsat contract, expected to be worth \$134m.

The European Telecommunications Satellite Council (Eutelsat), representing 19 European nations, plans to launch two satellites in 1983. These satellites will have facilities for private data transmission as well as a capacity for carrying 12,500 telephone circuits.

The prime contractor is British Aerospace which has placed a bid for the Arabsat contract.

The French intend to launch a low-powered satellite in 1983 which could provide limited transmission facilities outside France.

The project, called Telecom, has its prime contractor, which has bid with British Aerospace jointly for Arabsat, along with Thomson-CSF of France.

The other bidders include Aerospatiale of France (involved in building Intelsat V), Hughes and RCA of the United States and SPAR Aerospace of Canada.

Optical fibre cabling is also likely to play a significant role in the future of all communication networks around the world but particularly in those countries like the Arab states where maintenance can be a problem.

This cable will replace

the copper coaxial that now covers the vast distances between the major cities.

Examples are Cairo to Djibouti, Aden to Jeddah to Cairo and Abu Dhabi to Aden. The fibre optic cable, although still at the test stage of its development, could provide greater transmission capacity without the need for signals to be reboosted.

The fibre is effectively a minute glass strand, about the width of a human hair, and has, at least in theory, an extremely large bandwidth. In other words the amount of information it can carry is substantially more than conventional cabling.

The minute fibre is able to carry several hundred times more information than a copper cable and can carry those signals further without much of the quality of those signals deteriorating. Copper cabling needs signal amplification every two to three kilometres, whereas an optical fibre can easily carry signals for 10km without the need for amplification.

In the case of countries where it is extremely difficult to gain access rapidly to conventional terrestrial cable routes, the economics of the satellite and the fibre optic can then be seen.

B.J.

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The Muppets are familiar to viewers of television in nine Arab countries.



## Capitalization and week's change

(Current market price multiplied by the number of shares in issue for the stock quoted)

مَكْنَزٍ مِنَ الْأَمْوَالِ



by the dairies  
e still  
vesting in  
HK, page 22

Stock markets  
FT Ind 466.3  
FT Gilt 69.21

Sterling

\$ 2.3670

Index 81.1

Dollar

Index 89.5

DM 2.1285

Gold

\$506.50

Money

3 month sterling 14.14

5 month Euro 17.17

6 month Euro 16.16

Friday's close

5m NEB

plans aimed

at small

companies

Plans to establish a novel

scheme aimed directly at

small manufacturing companies

has been submitted to Sir

Joseph, Secretary of

State for Industry, by the

National Enterprise Board.

The NEB intends to launch

a scheme towards the end of

this month and up to £5m has

been allocated. If the scheme is

approved by the Government,

companies in England will be

able to apply for up to £50,000.

Formulation of the new loans

scheme is in line with the

Government's revised guidelines

for the NEB.

The loans are designed to

stimulate the growth of small

manufacturing businesses par-

ticularly although not exclusive-

ly in the technology sector, and

are aimed at higher risk

projects.

Call for monitoring

of EEC legislation

The Confederation of British

Industry has called on the

European Commission to moni-

tor Community laws more

thoroughly and avoid imposing too

many unnecessary laws and

regulations. A CBI study, pub-

lished today, supports member-

ship of the EEC but is highly

critical of the Community's

performance.

British Aerospace

shares will sell

British Aerospace is expected

to have no difficulty in raising

£50m cash from the sale of a

major minority of its shares

after details of the prospectus

are announced at the end of

this week. The group, at present

entirely state-owned, is enjoying

a buoyant period in its activi-

ties which include guided

weapons, supersonic fighters,

and business aircraft.

US to build Renaults

A tentative agreement has

been reached under which

Renault cars will be produced

at the American Motors Cor-

poration plant in Kenosha,

Wisconsin, according to the

United Auto Workers' union.

Soviet crop shortfall

The Soviet Union looks set

for another mediocre grain

crop in 1981, according to

the International Wheat Coun-

cil. Winter grain plantings in

the USSR are officially esti-

mated at 84.32 million acres

against the target of 91.76

## Budget may shift taxation burden from industrial to financial sector

By David Blake  
Economics Editor

A fundamental switch in government tax priorities is now under consideration for the next Budget. Ministers are believed to be considering a switch in taxation which would benefit the industrial sector at the expense of financial and corporate parts of the economy.

At the same time a cut in interest rates is thought to be under consideration.

A drop in interest rates is likely to be one of the subjects raised at a meeting between the Prime Minister and Sir Jeremy Morse, representing the Committee of London Clearing Bankers, later today. Mrs Thatcher is known to be highly critical of the clearing banks which have played a major role in expanding the money supply over the last few months.

She also complained of the attitudes adopted by the clearing banks over the past 12 months. The Prime Minister has not forgotten the role which the banks played in allowing average wage rates to rise significantly during 1979 and 1980. She is thought to be particularly aware of the knock-on effect which this had on public sector pay.

There is also the problem of clearing bank profits, which are thought to be particularly significant in the light of the high nominal interest rates which now prevail.

However, such problems still are thought to leave a "wind-

fall" tax on bank profits as no more than an even bet. The widely varying profit performance of each of the four clearing banks is one contributory factor.

So too is the fact that all of the clearing banks have played their part in supporting the manufacturing sector over the past few months.

This means that the auditors have built up a pattern of support for industry which could call into question the validity of their apparent profit figures.

Within the Government, there has been an unusual role reversal on how to deal with the banking and financial sectors.

The Bank of England has taken a strong line in favour of the clearing banks, arguing that they have defended the interests of industry. At the same time, it has belittled the banks into supporting industrial companies.

On the other hand, ministers have traditionally thought of as being right wing, such as Mr Nigel Lawson, Financial Secretary to the Treasury, have argued for higher taxes on banks.

They argue that the policy of holding down inflation through tight control of the money supply involves a "windfall" profit for the banks through high interest rates.

Such profit is thought to be equivalent to the profits earned from the North Sea by oil companies which benefit from oil price rises in which they play no part.

## Italy curbs credit to defend currency

From John Earle,  
Rome, Feb 1

Italy has announced a series of credit restrictions to defend the lira against mounting pressure.

The currency is under the strain of an estimated \$19,000m (£7,317m) trade deficit for 1980, the highest inflation in the European Community at over 21 per cent, and a steady slide in the dollar exchange rate which on Friday crossed the psychological barrier of 1,000 lire. Sterling also closed at a record 2,389 lire.

The Treasury Ministry and the Bank of Italy announced that with effect from March foreign borrowings to finance imports must not surpass the level reached on December 31. Any excess will be subject to a 50 per cent non-interest bearing deposit with the Bank of Italy, at the exchange rate obtaining on December 31. Foreign exchange borrowed to finance exports however will be exempt from the limits.

In 1981, credit expansion in lira must not exceed 12 per cent. The Bank of Italy will continue with the present system of monthly ceilings on domestic credit expansion, rising from 2 per cent at the end of April (over December 31, 1980) to 12 per cent at the end of December.

Altogether, the authorities are prepared to allow a 13 per cent rise in both lira and foreign currency lending this year.

Senator Nino Andreatta, the Treasury minister, said that these measures were in real terms of 1.5 per cent was still possible this year, while inflation should fall from about 22 per cent to 15 per cent.

## Unions and CBI seek industry boost

By Patricia Tisdall  
Management Correspondent

Fresh efforts to persuade the Prime Minister and her Cabinet colleagues to ease economic controls will be made this week at a meeting of the National Economic Development Council.

Wednesday's meeting, with Mrs Thatcher taking the chair, is to resume the three-way discussions on macro-economic matters which began shortly after the present Government came into office. Papers from the CBI, the TUC and the National Economic Development Council will be considered each of which expresses acute concern about erosion of the industrial base.

TUC leaders are expected to call for an injection of over £50,000m of public funds as an immediate step towards industrial recovery. Union proposals will be spelled out fully in the TUC's annual economic review, which is to be published later today. These will include a support package for private industry as well as increased spending on public sector investment projects.

In debating their case, TUC leaders are expected to stress the impact of present policies on unemployment and the necessity to prevent jobless

totals from rising further. TUC projections are that a continuation of present policies would lead to a further one million people out of work during the next 12 months while even a stimulus of £5,000m would only hold unemployment at its present level.

While there is no question of a formal alliance against the Government there is agreement between the CBI and TUC leaders that some alleviation for industry is needed. The strategy document initiated by Sir Terence Beckett, the CBI's director general, will not be published until next month. However, the changes industrialists believe are needed in the short term are catalogued in pre-Budget submissions to be published tomorrow.

The CBI, while supporting the overall drive against inflation, wants a further immediate cut in interest rates. It also wants a reduction in the employer's National Insurance surcharge, which it regards as a payroll tax; help on energy costs, and measures to encourage investment. Above all, CBI leaders are expected to stress the adverse impact the high exchange rate is having on industry performance and profits.

Unless British industry can compete internationally, the



Sir Terence Beckett: seeking further cut in loan rates...

CBI argues, it will not be able to generate enough profits to increase investment and create employment. There are also considerable fears among industrialists that the shakeout in labour and companies during the past year has caused an irrevocable long term damage.

CBI leaders are conscious that their members could do more to help themselves, but argue that the benefits will take time to show. Sir Raymond Penock, the president, who as well as Sir Terence will be present

at Wednesday's meeting, said last week that "settling the economic backcloth right is essential if we are to get business moving out of the present rut of recession. But that does not remove the onus from us to make ourselves more efficient".

This will be the first formal meeting between Sir Terence and the Prime Minister since an interview immediately after the CBI's national conference. Sir Terence's promise of a "bare knuckle fight" in his closing speech led to several resignations from the CBI, publicly exposing the split between industrialists who do not want the Government to ease the monetarist clampdown and those who feel it has already been held for too long.

Sir Terence and Sir Raymond will need to convince Mrs Thatcher that they represent the views of the majority of industrialists on Wednesday. Though radical policy changes are unlikely, the Prime Minister may be prepared to make modifications to meet some of the employers' demands on issues such as energy pricing and incentives for new research and development projects.

A powerful influencing factor may be the arguments put up by the NEDO for "positive adjustment" policies and selective aid to industry, particularly in high technology areas.

## Norwegians press for separate gas pipeline

By Nicholas Hirst  
Energy Correspondent

Norway's state oil company, Statoil, is putting strong pressure on the Norwegian Government to agree to its plan to develop a gas-gathering pipeline system independent of the £2,000m project planned to link fields in the British sector of the North Sea.

The partners in Statoil, the largest Norwegian oil field which has extensive associated gas reserves, have decided to recommend a pipeline system which would deliver wet gas for petrochemical production to Norway and dry gases for commercial, industrial and domestic heating to a terminal at Emden in West Germany.

But the plan involves pipelines crossing the deep Norwegian trench, an expensive and technically complicated operation which would be avoided if the Norwegian gas was sold to the British Gas Corporation and delivered to Britain.

Despite relatively high recent offers for Norwegian gas,

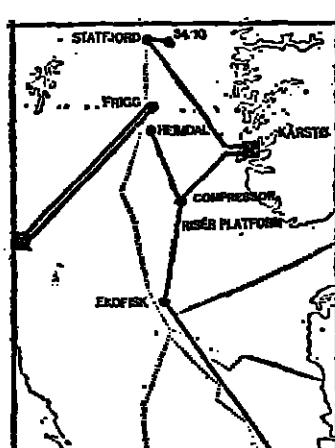
British Gas's reputation as a "misery" monopoly buyer has discouraged the Norwegian consortiums from delivering to Britain and encouraged them to pursue contracts with a gas-hungry Europe.

Initially the Norwegian pipeline is planned to collect gas from the Heimdal and Statfjord fields and the gas associated with oil in the so-called "golden block" 34/10. Partners in the Heimdal field, which contains mostly "dry" gases are like the Statfjord partners pressing for an all-Norwegian system.

Together the three fields would deliver 8,000 cubic metres per year to a terminal at Karsto on the Norwegian coast.

The British scheme is now estimated to cost twice as much, and, as it is to go ahead at the same time as the Norwegian plan, would create intense pressure on pipe and other manufacturing.

A link between the two systems is likely to be agreed, giving both sectors flexibility in marketing the gas, but there



Norway's planned North Sea gas pipeline.

can be no doubt that there is strong opposition on the British side that most of the Norwegian gas looks likely to be landed on the Continent. The addition of the Norwegian supplies to the British system would have greatly improved its economics and would have eased the problems of meeting future demand.

The British scheme has proved far more difficult to finance than was originally planned.

## Move to inject cash into BPC

By Philip Robinson

Mr Robert Maxwell and directors of BPC, in which he has a 29.5 stake, are expected to meet officials of the National Westminster Bank this week to discuss arrangements involving fresh capital being injected into Europe's largest printing group.

Both sides confirmed last night that discussions were at an advanced stage, but would not say whether the package would include Mr Maxwell's private Pergamon Press publishing empire taking convertible loan stock, or whether it might convert some of the overdrafts into BPC equity.

Mr Maxwell now has an office in BPC's headquarters and is working closely with Mr Peter Robinson, BPC's chairman.

City speculation is that, if Mr Maxwell is successful, he could take BPC into private ownership and perhaps return later with a combined BPC-Pergamon Press for a full Stock Market quotation.

## Dupont to press case on steelmaking crisis

By Peter Hill  
Industrial Editor

Talks crucial to the survival of an important part of the independent steel industry will take place tomorrow at the Department of Industry.

A senior representative of Dupont, the Midlands steel and engineering group, and Hadfield, the Loughborough steel making group, will emphasize to Sir Keith Joseph, the Industry Secretary, the gravity of the crisis facing private steel makers catering for the engineering industry.

Both companies, together with Round Oak, the steel company owned jointly by the British Steel Corporation and TI and GKN figure in draft plans drawn up by Sir Keith's department for rationalization of the engineering steel sector which would also embrace the BSC's operations in the same market.

Codenamed Phoenix Two, discussions on this venture have made considerably less progress than those on Phoenix One, the rationalization plan which

would bring together the steel mill, bars and wire rod facilities of the BSC and GKN in a joint company. Its formation may be announced by GKN later this week.

Phoenix Two faces serious problems. Sir Keith is anxious to refer to discussions aimed at eliminating the areas of overlap between the public and private sectors in the engineering sector when he announces the Government's decision on the BSC's corporate plan later this month.

Dupont, whose half-year losses were £4.7m and which according to City estimates has been losing about £1m a month since the recession began, has been deeply last summer, has been the subject of persistent speculation. Last week its share price fell to an all-time low of 7p before a modest improvement to 12p. The group is capitalized at £294m. Last month the Bank of England became involved in discussions between the company and its bankers.

Dupont has steelmaking facilities at Llanelli in south Wales and in the Midlands.

## Rome ban on Sony televisions from Wales

By Derek Harris  
Commercial Editor

Italian customs officials have banned distribution in Italy of a consignment of television sets assembled at the Bridgend, Glamorgan, factory of Sony, the Japanese electronics company. The officials claim the sets do not appear to meet the Community definition of an EEC-made product as being assembled from at least 45 per cent in value of EEC-source components.

There are fears that it could signal an attempt by Italy to increase distribution in Italy of television sets assembled in Britain by Japanese makers. Matsushita is the other Japanese electronics manufacturer assembling sets in Britain which would be most at risk if this proved to be Italian policy.

Intervention by the Department of Trade has raised hopes at Sony that the sets may be released soon, but negotiations by the department with the Italians are still going on. Sony already has around £1m worth of Bridgend sets in stock which it could not sell elsewhere because they are specially made to be compatible with the Italian television system.

Sony, which has been exporting to Italy for five years, has sold 19,000 sets in the country last year, all made at Bridgend. These were 20-inch and 22-inch colour sets in which European component sourcing was high.

Sony was expected to sell around 16,500 sets in Italy this year. It had started to sell 27-inch sets which until the year-end will have Japanese-made tubes. A £10m factory at Bridgend will be producing 27-inch tubes later this year. It is a consignment of 1,400 of the 27-inch colour sets which is being held up at a warehouse near Milan with the Italian officials apparently claiming that some components were made by other European electronics companies, although they would normally be classed as a European product, have been partly processed outside the EEC.

If the Italians pursued a new system of classification for component sourcing and continued to ban the Sony sets, the only option left to Sony would be to take the issue to the European Court where it could become an important test case.

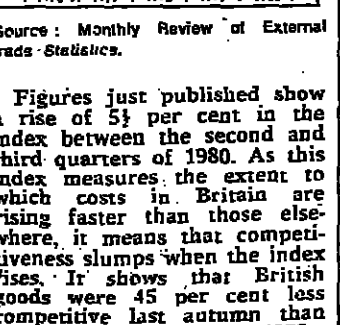
## UK exports losing competitive position

By Melvyn Westlake

Fresh evidence of the deterioration in the competitiveness of British industry seems certain to fuel fears for export and import prospects this year.

Labour costs have continued to rise much faster than those elsewhere and the squeeze on export profits appears to have been resumed, according to figures produced both by economists at the Department of Trade and the International Monetary Fund.

The IMF index of relative unit labour costs is one of the most closely watched indices of a country's competitiveness. This index, which compares changes in unit labour costs here with those of our most important competitors, allowing for differences in productivity, rose 25 per cent in the first nine months of 1980, compared with the average level of 1979.



Figures just published show a rise of 51 per cent in the index between the second and third quarters of 1980, and this index measures the extent to which costs in Britain are rising faster than those elsewhere, it means that competitiveness slumps when the index rises. It shows that British goods were 45 per cent less competitive last autumn than they were on average in 1978.

There can be little doubt that the position has continued to deteriorate since then because of the strength of the pound.

The latest monthly Review of External Trade Statistics shows that the relative profit earned from exporting began to worsen again in the last three months of 1980, after holding steady for about a year. It shows that exporters have had to cut their profits more than companies supplying the home market during the last two years.

However, profits have had to be reduced on both home and overseas markets. A third index shows a further deterioration during the fourth quarter in the price competitiveness of domestic companies competing with imports in the British market. Domestic suppliers were 11 per cent less competitive with imports at the end of 1980 than at the beginning of 1979.

## Ministers unlikely to outlaw price fixing

By John Huxley

Ministers are expected to decide soon whether to introduce legislation which would make collusive tendering—otherwise known as price fixing—illegal.

Indications are that they may finally be won over by arguments that to do so would reduce the authorities' success in detecting collusion by deterring would-be informants.

The subject has been under consideration by this and previous governments for several years, and was discussed in a consultative document published by Mrs Sally Oppenheim, Minister for Consumer Affairs, last July.

Collusive tendering is the practice whereby companies or individuals bidding for work agree beforehand which of their number shall win a contract and structure their tenders accordingly.

In the past it has proved difficult to detect. Arrangements are made in secret and written records are unlikely to be kept. As the consultative document made clear: "Evidence is unlikely to come to light unless a party to the arrangement or a disgruntled former 'would-be' party decides to break rank."

The Government accepts that collusion strikes at the roots of fair competition, and may be objected to on both economic and ethical grounds. "On an economic level it entails a loss of economic efficiency and a financial burden on the consumer ultimately the consumer or taxpayer. On an ethical level, it involved deception for financial gain", the consultative paper states.

At present collusive tendering is covered by restrictive practices law which requires that any such agreement be registered with the Director General of Fair Trading. It is



Mrs Oppenheim: general review promised of legislation.

open to those affected by the operation of the laws to seek civil damages, but no criminal penalties follow from failure to declare and register agreements. It has been found that the pursuit of civil damages is both time consuming, expensive and uncertain in its result.

Pressure to make collusive tendering a criminal offence has grown in recent years, largely as a result of restrictive practices in the construction industry and in the supply of electrical and mechanical services and telephone cables.

As the consultative document says: "Whether the practice is as simple as agreeing to bid, or as complex as the use of a 'bidding' system, it is certain that it is not dead but shows no signs of doing so."

Apart from problems over definition, the Government believes there is a risk that detection would become more difficult if it became a criminal offence, as this would deter would-be informants.

Mrs Oppenheim has already suggested collusive tendering should form part of a general review of restrictive practices legislation. It looks likely that she will decide to tackle the problem by strengthening the powers of the Office of Fair Trading.

## New Treasury chief set to cut taxes for the rich to help the poor

### Man in a hurry to change US economy

Mr Donald Regan, United States Secretary of the Treasury, is in a hurry to launch an era of economic conservatism. He is determined to shake up what he views as an economy "stuck in the mud".

Mr Regan has been in office for just over a week. Already, he has held many budget meetings, testified before Congress, made key departmental appointments, talked at length with the press and booksellers, and given a major speech to the National Press Club.

It is not vanity and the quest for power alone that drive Mr Regan now and made him ditch Lynch, the brokerage conglomerate. He took his new post out of deep conviction that drastic changes were needed in United States economic policy and that his doctrines must be given a try.

He asserts that he is a pragmatist, but every sentence he utters underscores the depth of his capitalist conviction. He readily admits that the Reagan administration's attitudes fall closely into line with the views espoused by Adam Smith over 200 years ago. "We are free market people," he declares.

He makes every opportunity to talk of the hardships of capital gains tax and the need to cut the rate down to 20 per cent from the present 28 per cent. When income tax is discussed, he first turns to the need to chop the very top levels. He sees absolutely nothing unfair or inequitable about his tax approach that will provide far greater cash tax reductions to the wealthy, than to people on low incomes.

Savings must be increased and those most able to save are the wealthy, so it makes sense to give them big tax



## MANAGEMENT

# Why the dairies are still putting money into milk

What tempts an entire industry to invest more money in a market that is steadily declining in volume terms and is also under threat from cut price competition from abroad? The British dairy industry has seen its volume sales of drinking milk fall by about 2 per cent a year and now an EEC inquiry threatens to open Britain to a flood of cheap European milk.

Yet most of the major dairy companies have spent large sums of money on new capital investment over the past three years, and are planning to spend more in the future. Unigate has invested £10m in a new dairy at Chesham, Bucks, in Essex, which claims to be the most modern in the world. It is now likely to spend a further £18m on a new dairy in the West Midlands and is spending £2.5m modernizing and expanding its dairy at Luton, Bedfordshire.

Express Dairy, part of Grand Metropolitan, has spent more than £2m revamping its dairy at Morden in South London and is about to embark on a similar programme at Crickehowm in north London.

Associated Dairies has re-equipped its dairy at Leeds, expanded its van sales service and made other investments.

Mr Paul Guillemain, marketing director of Express Dairy Milk, is convinced that the industry ought to be able to halt the decline in consumption by better marketing. Milk roundmen, he believes, could be better motivated to persuade people to buy more of the product. Also, much could be done to make customers aware of the different kinds of milk available.

Mr Guillemain's main concern, however, is price. Milk is a price-sensitive product, he says, and in recent years its cost has been going up faster than that of living generally. If price increases in milk could be kept back to reasonable levels, he believes, there would be a good chance of halting the decline in milk drinking.

Milk prices are controlled by the Government, and pricing policy is out of the hands of the dairies. But what is within their control is costs.

Mr Guillemain points out that it costs just as much to deliver one pint of milk to a doorstep as to a shop, so it is vital that demand for home-delivered milk be kept up. He is considering the idea of adding delivery charges in those areas where there is a very low average consumption per household. But he is cautious about taking this too far because milk consumption per head in Britain is far higher than in other countries where there is no home delivery system. Countries

that have recently dropped home deliveries have seen a dramatic collapse in milk drinking per head.

At Unigate, Mr Chris Ball, managing director of the milk division, is also concerned with price, but from a different viewpoint. Unigate's view is that new dairy investment is largely dependent on the Government's allowing a higher price for milk. Last year it threatened to hold up a decision on its £18m West Midlands dairy investment until the Government agreed a big increase in the price of milk. This puts Unigate in a position almost opposite that of Express Dairies. Higher prices will give the profits that justify the investment, Unigate believes. Worries that those increases will cut volume further do not figure prominently in Unigate thinking.

Like Express, however, Unigate is concerned about the costs of operating its distribution network. One way that this is being done is by looking at ways of merging milk distribution with Unigate's other food interests, St Ivel and Scott Bowers. The three companies already work together through a new joint company in the North of England, Unigate Chill Distribution.

The need to cut costs is one of the unspoken reasons behind the move towards larger, computer-controlled dairies. They employ fewer people per pint of milk produced, and, if volume can be kept up, are bound to be more profitable. This is hardly surprising. Looked at crudely, a dairy is not very different from a bottling line.

To be sure, a lot of laboratory testing and cooling is carried out. But the product arrives to a large extent already manufactured.

The only problem is that the bottles or cartons of milk have to be driven longer distances to get to the doorstep—a good thing in a period of soaring fuel costs.

Much of the £10m that Express is spending on dairy equipment is designed to take advantage of its new "pint" bottle. Compared with its existing bottle it can get 16 per cent more of these on a lorry.

The dairy companies are aware that the market is declining, and almost all the new investment is aimed at replacing older, inefficient labour-intensive plants rather than on expanding production. Because of this, Mr Ball says, the investments do not always stand up on their own from the point of view of return on capital.

But it is against our policy to create overcapacity. We avoid that like the plague. But if the market is declining so fast, why are the EEC producers so keen to invade it and why are the British companies so keen to invest more in it? The answer is that for all its long-term decline, there is still big money in the dairy industry. The average household still spends more than 60p per head a week on milk. This is about 10 per cent of its total spending on food and more than is spent on any other food category.

Roger Hardman

A milkman on his rounds in Britain: countries where home deliveries have stopped have experienced a sharp fall in milk consumption.

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## Stock relief: still not the right answer?

A further hazard is facing this year out by companies trying to get out their annual accounts in time. It is the latest episode in the chequered history of stock relief.

In November, the Government issued a consultative paper outlining the proposals it intends to introduce in the 1981 Finance Bill.

The final legislation is expected to be along similar lines and will apply to all companies where accounting periods end after November 14, 1980.

Thus, companies with December year-ends will have to decide whether to calculate their stock relief on the old or new basis when preparing the figures for the tax charge in their annual accounts for this year. Although they can choose whether to calculate the relief on the old or new basis, the increase in the value of stocks between November 14 and the year end will be disregarded even if the new proposals are ignored.

The new relief is designed to eliminate weaknesses which the Government believed were inherent in the old scheme. Stock relief was introduced to give some measure of relief from inflation it was thought unfair to give relief for increases in volume of stocks held, especially as the system was open to manipulation of stock levels at the year end.

Relief will now be geared to the effects of price changes on stocks held at the start of a company's accounting period.

For administrative reasons the actual price changes of any particular stock item cannot be used, relief being based on an all-stocks index which will be produced by the Government.

This arbitrary method of granting relief will work harshly where a company has high stock levels of a commodity whose price has risen more sharply than the average over the year.

One advantage of the new method of relief is that it virtually eliminates the likelihood of any drawback of past relief. The relief is based on the stock values it will be given even where the book value of stock has fallen since the end of the previous accounting period. Under the new proposals, a drawback can only occur where a business ceases or where stocks are reduced to a level which is close to cessation.

The Government has unfortunately not defined what type of situation it has in mind

here, but it is presumably meant to cover such things as the shifting off of part of a company's activities.

One interesting result is that there will, in most cases, be no further need for a deferred tax provision to account for stock relief previously received. It seems that companies can now release any deferred tax provisions relating to such relief to their profit and loss accounts, thus giving them an unexpected boost.

In the past, the Government has been upset about the benefits gained from stock relief by companies which financed their stocks out of borrowings. It felt that companies such as the large supermarket chains whose turnover is fast enough to allow them to sell stock before they had paid for it were receiving relief for inflationary costs they did not have to bear.

For this reason, the relief is to be reduced by a fraction designed to determine the extent to which stocks are financed by credit. However, this restriction will be applied only to larger companies whose stock values exceed £1m.

It has been obvious since the introduction of stock relief in 1975 that the system needed review. But the proposals in the Government paper seem to

**'The proposals in the government paper seem to be designed for ease of administration rather than as a serious attempt at finding the best solution to the problem'**

be designed for ease of administration rather than as a serious attempt at finding the best solution to the problem.

In particular, the Government has rejected current cost accounts as a basis for taxation which is a serious area in which they could be of use.

The use of current cost accounts would seem a fairer basis for the calculation of stock relief than the rather arbitrary all-stocks index. Also, the method by which the new proposals have been introduced could lead to confusion.

When interpreting new legislation shortcomings in the draftsmanship are a hazard that has to be accepted. But to be expected to prepare the tax charge for a company on the basis of proposed legislation calls for more crystal ball gazing than might seem advisable where the preparation of year-end figures is concerned.

Clare Watson

## Insurance's graven image and its ancient ethic

From Mr M. E. M. Pearson  
Sir, Insurance, the world's second oldest profession, is an activity whereby the misfortunes of the few are spread over the fortunes of the many. In recent times, however, the industry has forsaken the true ethic of underwriting profit for the graven image of premium cashflow, the investment of which appears ever more attractive than the ancient ethic of insurance.

Since the last war we have seen rising stock markets, soaring property values, inflation and now a strong pound coupled with high interest rates. Small wonder then that more and more financiers have been tempted to play the insurance game, with the result that world market capacity has expanded, that the competition has driven rates down and that underwriter power dwindles as broker power grows relentlessly more rapacious.

This is the disease of the international insurance market today. It will be cured only

when underwriting, loss over-takes investment gain.

I would have thought that most External Names at Lloyd's would do well to consider their position against this background. Doubtless, the vast majority of them are well looked after by their agents, but paragraph 9, 02 of the Fisher Report provides an irrefutable charter for the existence of Lady Middleton's Association, as follows:

"The relationship between Name and Agent is not an equal one and not all Names are able to secure proper treatment. The argument that Names can shop around among Agents and can leave an Agent with whom he is dissatisfied seems to us to be somewhat unrealistic, particularly in view of the paucity of information available to Names to enable them to judge the relative merits of Agents and of Syndicates. Complaints made by our witnesses have centred on the information available to prospective Names, and the Agents and other information furnished by Agents to their Names (particularly in

formation about the progress of the open years).

External Names do not work in the market place and the are therefore incapable of judging the possible significance of a lengthy queue of broker beside a particular underwriter's box. Indeed, many of them who read this will not even know what I am talking about, in which case I advise them to join Lady Middleton's Association quickly.

Agents who take proper care of their Names have nothing to fear from her, but the new council will need all the help it can get in dealing with those few that don't. So let us have no more blimpish abuse of stage against her; she is a brave and honourable woman and, it is humble enough to listen to her, she will do Lloyd's nothing but good.

Yours faithfully,  
MALCOLM PEARSON,  
Chairman,  
Pearson Webb Springthorpe (International) Ltd,  
Adelaide House,  
London EC4R 9AD.

## British Telecom monopoly

From Mr Stuart Isaacs  
Sir, As chairman of the British Insurance Brokers' Association, Mr Ian Findlay is doubtless aware of the EEC's long-term interest in the creation of a unified Community-wide insurance market. His concern about the Post Office monopoly in relation to telecommunications equipment (January 26) should also be appreciated in a Community-wide perspective.

The Treaty of Rome, article 90(1), expressly forbids member states in the case of public undertakings and undertakings to which they grant special or exclusive rights either to enact

or to maintain in force any measure contrary, amongst other things, to the Community's competition rules.

Even if British Telecom is properly to be regarded as entrusted with the operation of services of general economic interest, the character of a revenue-producing monopoly, so that the application of the competition rules must not obstruct the performance of its tasks, article 90(2) still says that the development of trade must not be affected to such an extent as would conflict with the interests of the Community.

## Designing the ideal small ship

From Mr D. Laurent Giles  
Sir, One can only applaud the work of Mr Tattersall (January 27) and Vosper Hovermarine in their efforts to improve the deep sea operation of the Hovercraft principle and one must sympathise with the difficulty in obtaining serious MoD interest in such projects in this country. It is with good reason I am consistently being told by my friends in the United States that we are "the R & D department of the United States".

However, with a more enlightened attitude to new ideas and the improvement of hull design—as implied in Mr Julian Taylor's interesting article (November 27)—I do not think it need necessarily be correct to say that "the higher performance displacement ship is still prohibitively expensive above 30 knots".

As Mr Taylor said, the traditional hull form requires increased length (and therefore cost) to provide higher speeds and sea-keeping qualities. Also, they also necessitate a relatively narrow beam which, in the context of modern warships, means expensive hull structure and aluminium superstructure.

However, a more recent research shows that this situation is not unavoidable and there is a possibility of building hulls which can achieve speeds in excess of 30 knots on a waterline length of only 75 metres. These should be able to operate at relatively heavy displacements without requiring outrageous horsepower, or expensive light-weight structures which should be extremely sea-kindly.

If Mr Tattersall is making progress in the development of the sidewall hovercraft, then others are making progress in improving the overall efficiency of the displacement hull.

Yours faithfully,  
DAVID GILES,  
Thornycroft, Giles & Associates Ltd,  
The Embankment,  
Brembridge,  
Isle of Wight PO35 5NS.

# Public and Educational Appointments

## University College of Swansea

**Lecturer**  
Applications are invited for a vacancy of Lecturer in the Department of Computer Science. Candidates should have a first or good second class honours degree in mathematics or computer science, or closely related subject together with substantial postgraduate research experience. Applications are welcome from candidates with research interests in any area of computer science but those whose speciality is artificial intelligence or the development of expert systems will be given particular consideration.

The appointment will date from 1 September, 1981, and will be made at the lower end of the salary scale £5,505-£11,575 per annum.

Closing date for applications, Friday 27 February, 1981.

## Senior Research Assistant

Applications are invited for the post of Senior Research Assistant in the Department of Oceanography and Anthropology, to work on an SSRC funded project on the social consequences of redundancy in steel. The person appointed will be required to undertake a study of the local networks and domestic organizations of a redundant steelworks, and to work with local people who are redundant from the steel industry in South West Wales, and who are respondents in the project's major survey of redundant workers.

The appointment, which will commence from the soonest date that can be arranged, will be for two years, and the commencing salary will be on a scale up to £5,505 per annum plus USS/USDP benefits.

Closing date for applications, Wednesday, 25 February, 1981.

## Senior Research Assistant in Hydrodynamics

Applications are invited for the vacancy of Senior Research Assistant in the Department of Oceanography. Applicants should have a degree in one of the physical/mathematical sciences and a Ph.D. in Oceanography, Sedimentology fluid flow or a related discipline. The successful candidate will be required to undertake an investigation of the sedimentology and hydrography of a linear sandbank in the northern Bristol Channel, which is supported by the NERC and will involve both the collection of data at sea and numerical analysis and modelling.

The appointment will be for one year in the first instance, renewable for a further year and the salary will be £5,505 per annum plus USS/USDP benefits in the first year.

Closing date for applications, Friday 27 February 1981.

Further particulars and application forms (2 copies) for the above posts may be obtained from the Personnel Office, University College of Swansea, Singleton Park, Swansea, SA2 8PP, to which office they should be returned by the above dates.

## Loughborough University of Technology

**UNIVERSITY REGISTRAR**  
The University hopes shortly to appoint a successor to its Registrar, Mr Frank Roberts, who will retire in September 1981. Applications for the post are therefore invited from suitably qualified persons with considerable administrative experience in universities, or more generally in higher education, local or national government, industry or commerce.

The Vice-Chancellor is by Charter the principal academic and administrative officer of the University. Under him the Registrar is responsible for the general supervision, co-ordination and management of the University's administrative services in its academic, financial, estates management and residential and catering areas.

Salary will be by negotiation in the Administrative Grade IV (professional equivalent) range subject to minimum of £14,275 per annum (under review). Application forms and further details are available from Paul Johnson, Establishment Officer, ref. 81/2AD.

Loughborough Leicestershire

## University of East Anglia

**LECTURER IN ACCOUNTANCY AND FINANCE**  
Applications are invited for two newly established posts of Lecturer in Accounting and Finance. The successful candidates will be required to teach and supervise students in the areas of financial accounting, financial management and financial economics. The successful candidates will be required to undertake research in their respective fields and to contribute to the University's academic and administrative activities.

Applications should be sent to the Registrar, University of East Anglia, Norwich NR4 7TJ, by Friday, 27 February, 1981.

## University of Hull

**M.A. IN CRIMINOLOGY PART-TIME OR FULL-TIME**  
Applications are invited for the post of Lecturer in Criminology, which will involve teaching and supervising students in the areas of criminology, criminal justice and criminal law. The successful candidate will be required to undertake research in their respective fields and to contribute to the University's academic and administrative activities.

Applications should be sent to the Registrar, University of Hull, Kingston Road, Hull HU6 7RN, by Friday, 27 February, 1981.

Further details and application forms are available from the Registrar, University of Hull, Kingston Road, Hull HU6 7RN.

Applications should be sent to the Registrar, University of Hull, Kingston Road, Hull HU6 7RN.

## University of Cambridge

**DEPARTMENT OF ANATOMY**  
Applications are invited for the post of Lecturer in Anatomy. The successful candidate will be required to teach and supervise students in the areas of anatomy and physiology. The successful candidate will be required to undertake research in their respective fields and to contribute to the University's academic and administrative activities.

Applications should be sent to the Registrar, University of Cambridge, Cambridge CB2 3RQ, by Friday, 27 February, 1981.

## University of Sussex

**LECTURER IN ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE**  
Applications are invited for the post of Lecturer in Artificial Intelligence. The successful candidate will be required to teach and supervise students in the areas of artificial intelligence and computer science. The successful candidate will be required to undertake research in their respective fields and to contribute to the University's academic and administrative activities.

## University of Glasgow

**LECTURER IN COMPUTING SCIENCE**  
Applications are invited for the post of Lecturer in Computing Science. The successful candidate will be required to teach and supervise students in the areas of computing science and computer science. The successful candidate will be required to undertake research in their respective fields and to contribute to the University's academic and administrative activities.

Applications should be sent to the Registrar, University of Glasgow, Glasgow G1 1RU, by Friday, 27 February, 1981.

## University of Durham

**LECTURESHIP IN ACCOUNTING**  
Applications are invited for the post of Lecturer in Accounting. The successful candidate will be required to teach and supervise students in the areas of accounting and finance. The successful candidate will be required to undertake research in their respective fields and to contribute to the University's academic and administrative activities.

Applications should be sent to the Registrar, University of Durham, Durham DH1 1TA, by Friday, 27 February, 1981.

Further details and application forms are available from the Registrar, University of Durham, Durham DH1 1TA.

Applications should be sent to the Registrar, University of Durham, Durham DH1 1TA.

## University of London

**DEPARTMENT OF ANATOMY**  
Applications are invited for the post of Lecturer in Anatomy. The successful candidate will be required to teach and supervise students in the areas of anatomy and physiology. The successful candidate will be required to undertake research in their respective fields and to contribute to the University's academic and administrative activities.

Applications should be sent to the Registrar, University of London, London WC1E 6BT, by Friday, 27 February, 1981.

## University of Sheffield

**RESEARCH ASSISTANT**  
Applications are invited for the post of Research Assistant. The successful candidate will be required to assist in the research activities of the Department of Anatomy. The successful candidate will be required to undertake research in their respective fields and to contribute to the University's academic and administrative activities.

## Queen Mary College

**LECTURER IN PHYSIOLOGY**  
Applications are invited for the post of Lecturer in Physiology. The successful candidate will be required to teach and supervise students in the areas of physiology and anatomy. The successful candidate will be required to undertake research in their respective fields and to contribute to the University's academic and administrative activities.

Applications should be sent to the Registrar, Queen Mary College, London E1 4NS, by Friday, 27 February, 1981.

## Queen Elizabeth College

**LECTURER IN PHYSIOLOGY**  
Applications are invited for the post of Lecturer in Physiology. The successful candidate will be required to teach and supervise students in the areas of physiology and anatomy. The successful candidate will be required to undertake research in their respective fields and to contribute to the University's academic and administrative activities.

Applications should be sent to the Registrar, Queen Elizabeth College, London W8 7AH, by Friday, 27 February, 1981.

Further details and application forms are available from the Registrar, Queen Elizabeth College, London W8 7AH.

Applications should be sent to the Registrar, Queen Elizabeth College, London W8 7AH.

## University of London

**ROYAL POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL SCHOOL**  
**DEPUTY SECRETARY**  
Applications are invited from honours graduates with experience in administration for the post of Deputy Secretary. Besides deputising for the Secretary as necessary, the main duties include the servicing of the Academic Board and its sub-committees, responsibility for the School's Registry, and generally assisting the Secretary with the academic affairs of the School.

Salary on Grade III for academic-related Administrative Staff, i.e. £11,165 to £13,980 (under review) plus 1987 a year, London Allowance, Superannuation under Universities Superannuation Scheme.

Applicants are advised to obtain further particulars from the Secretary, Royal Postgraduate Medical School, Hammersmith Hospital, DuCane Road, London W12 0HS (Tel. 01-743 2033 ext. 352) to whom applications (six copies) should be sent naming three professional referees to arrive not later than Friday, 20 February, 1981.

## Queen Mary College

## Queen Elizabeth College

**LECTURER IN PHYSIOLOGY**  
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BY THE FINANCIAL EDITOR

David Hewson

## Trustee Savings Banks in a hurry

o long ago the sort of Dutch auction now developing for United Dominions Trust would have looked decidedly touch with reality.

agreed and heavily dependent on cost borrowings to finance the hire-purchase business, almost anyone bold enough to take on UDT, with its immediate access to an increased capital base, would be seen as a fairly godmother, not by the group's two main institutional investors Eagle Star and the Prudential, who were looking for a way of realizing 52 per cent stake.

last week's turn of events, as the Trustee Savings Banks were forced into bidding for whole of UDT instead of just taking three quarters of the instalment credit as originally envisaged last August, now brought them into open conflict with Lloyds & Scottish with the remote possibility that another clearing bank will enter the fray.

the time being the TSBs are clearly not that with the support of the UDT and the two institutions they will be the day, particularly as under their UDT's identity will be retained intact and with their limited experience in the hire-purchase field the chances of success are more likely if UDT were named into L & S, are lessened.

Whether L & S will be willing to raise assets enough to attract the backing of the board is also doubtful. Certainly, the bank has taken the view that UDT's non-purchase business is not worth the time and asset value placed on it last year although there is a view that the group is worth more dead than

or L & S one of the crucial considerations will be just what value it, and more importantly its two banking shareholders, National Bank of Scotland and Lloyds, put on having an important slice of the hire-purchase market given the oligopolistic nature of the British banking industry.

For the TSBs the full bid it embarked on last week raises important questions about development, raising fears that it may be ending before it can walk. Since the passage in 1973, the TSBs have been steadily pushing themselves into the third force in British banking, and, to be fair, with some success.

The key part of this transition has always been the replacement of its Treasury deposits with the Fund for Hire Banks Savings into more commercial—and vitally risky—deposits. The UDT move is a crucial move in this direction raising a full swoop its share of the personal market.

Yet it is now being forced into corners where it, even on its own admission, has no expertise and where even the clearing banks have been wary of trading.

Admittedly it has said it will sell off the TSBs to UDT operations and the Treasury Bank of England have given their blessing to the move but the danger exists that TSBs are being forced to bite off more than they can chew.

Indeed last August the TSBs made some use of the fact that with UDT retaining 5 per cent stake in the instalment credit business they could lean on its skills in the tricky world of consumer hire purchase.

All the same the merits of the original plan still hold, namely that the TSBs could finance UDT's lending portfolio from its ample fixed rate deposits—even more so now that interest rates are falling. The rub that the TSBs cannot choose their own

However this fairy-tale ending has obscured—or allowed everyone to conveniently forget—the issues of principle behind the tangled tale of dawn raids, strategic nominee shareholdings and a bidder hiding behind a Hongkong company.

The first twist to the tale was the accumulation of a 22.5 per cent shareholding in Renwick by six nominee companies. Behind the nominee companies lay the Uto Bank of Zurich, holding the shares for six "unrelated" clients all with roughly equal shares. The Takeover Panel's view was that there was no evidence they were acting together.

The Uto shares were bought through A. J. Bekhor who also turned out shortly after to be acting for Kangra International, the Hongkong company which through a raid and a series of market purchases soon had nearly 30 per cent of Renwick.

The Takeover Panel was assured that Kangra and Uto, whose combined holdings were over 50 per cent, were not acting in concert. However, the identities of the ultimate beneficiaries remained unknown.

After repeated attempts, Renwick finally merged Kangra for the first time. During the course of that meeting Renwick was told that Uto's clients had accepted a proposed 55p a share bid from Kangra. Control of Renwick was in Kangra's hands and there was nothing anyone could do about it even if they had wanted to.

Of course the price finally paid for Renwick seems a good one but the way in which control was acquired leaves much to be desired. The Takeover Panel, furthermore, faced with these nominee shareholdings seems to have been less than effective.

True, the Panel seems to have been satisfied with the assurances that the nominees and Kangra were not acting in concert, but the fact that Renwick was never in a position to mount a defence until it was too late, and that other Renwick shareholders are unclear to this day about the exact circumstances in which their company was taken over, is hardly a satisfactory state of affairs.

Investing in oil ... and avoiding some risks

Here at last ... the oil and gas fund for widows and orphans. At least that seems to be a view of Guinness Mahon, the merchant bank handling the offer for sale of shares in Oil and Gas Production, a Guernsey-based dollar-denominated investment vehicle.

The new company will use the cash raised, £8.7m initially, to invest in onshore drilling projects in the United States. But unlike so many of its predecessors, OGP will only buy into fields with sound production records and stream of revenues.

Hence investors can take what ought to be, at least, an inflation-proof stake in energy without exposing themselves to the huge, downside risk inherent in pure exploration ventures.

The new company has already paid out \$11.2m to purchase a working interest in one field partly to satisfy Stock Exchange listing requirements which disallow all-cash companies.

And shareholders successful in application for stock can presumably look forward to a run of cash calls as OGP finds further suitable opportunities.

Expectations must be that oil and gas prices will at least keep pace with inflation and probably outpace it, particularly in the case of gas if the United States authorities decide to de-regulate soon. But of course shareholders have to put their faith in the OGP team's ability to put working interests at the right price in what is a very competitive auction.

With 72 per cent of the issue already promised mainly to clients of Guinness Mahon and brokers James Capel there could be a scramble for the little stock remaining, while the stage is likely to be attracted to part of the offer which is for partly paid shares.

But given the current fashion it is hard to imagine that more traditional investors will not be confronted with similar opportunities if this one succeeds.

## Battle of the travel shops



The Exchange travel shop in Debenhams, Harrow: the company intends to have 70 such shops open in the stores chain by June.

The problem of Exchange Travel is likely to prove much more pressing. The company has opened 30 travel offices in Debenhams stores around the country since last autumn and is to extend the chain to 70, a £2.5m programme to be completed by next June.

Exchange applied to Abta for registration of 13 of the stores.

Unfortunately for Exchange, its applications went in at about the same time as Abta had to reach a decision on another controversial issue. P & O had applied for approval of a scheme to run travel offices on the premises of Radio Rental television hire shops.

The P & O proposal goes to the very heart of the retail travel agent's nightmare: the extension of travel sales facilities into retail establishments, be they supermarkets or private job agencies.

Abta's membership committee turned down both Exchange and P & O, though on different grounds. P & O was told that its scheme infringed Abta's restrictions on mixed business premises.

Mr McNally of Exchange Travel says that he has never been given a reason for refusal but understands from reports in the trade press that the membership committee disliked the layout of his offices.

Travel departments in retail stores are not new, but Abta has always insisted that they should operate separately from the store's other retail sections and not as much like a traditional High Street travel agency as possible.

Exchange's Debenhams ventures involve counters with sales staff behind them, similar to the arrangement in traditional retail stores. But this element of separation was

apparently not enough for the retail agents on the membership committee.

The gap between what Exchange wants on layout and what the retail agents would be prepared to accept is probably small but clouded by the scope of Mr McNally's plans.

The issue has divided Abta staff from sectors of the retail membership, with some staff believing that the association has taken on a battle it cannot win.

P & O submitted its application only after preliminary discussions with Abta full-time staff which led it to believe its scheme would be approved. The P & O bid has not yet been rejected outright. It is still bouncing between the membership committee and the retail agents' committee which apparently wants the membership committee to think again.

## Growing strength of South Africa's black trade unions

Johannesburg

The labour guidelines issued recently by the South African Chamber of Industries (FCI) are the first explicit recognition by a major business organization of the changing balance of power in the country's factories. They represent a clear victory for black workers and pose a threat to the monopoly that white unions have hitherto enjoyed in negotiating black (as well as white) wages.

The chamber guidelines also signal growing impatience among employers with the Government's fumbling of the new labour dispensation introduced eighteen months ago in the wake of the Wiehahn report on industrial relations.

The guidelines of the FCI to affiliated companies is that they should stop trying to cold-shoulder the more militant sections of the black union movement. Behind this change of heart is the struggle for recognition that these unions have been waging in the country's factories.

Though the post-Wiehahn system gave black unions the right to seek official registration, it did not mean many were reluctant to do so because of the conditions and controls attached. The effectiveness of a union, they argued, depended not on whether some official in Pretoria had given it a stamp of approval, but on the strength of its shop-floor support.

With the backing of the authorities and of every business organization, suspicious employers used to freeze these "independent" unions out of their factories. In their place

they sought to promote "parallel" unions for blacks run by white trade unions which were already registered and eager to keep black worker organizations docile.

Where parallel unions did not exist, employers still refused to deal with independent unregistered black unions, telling their black employees to channel their demands through factory liaison committees (half of whose membership may by law be appointed by management).

Acrimonious disputes over independent unregistered unions' demands for recognition by employers were at the root of much of South Africa's industrial unrest last year. The usual pattern was for workers to go on strike after alleged victimization by management of shop stewards or other union leaders.

Similar accusations have been made by unions during some of the dozen strikes that have occurred already in 1981.

Independent unions also suspect that some company managements may have been behind the detention without trial of 20 or more union officials last year.

The chief difficulties of the independent unions attracted more and more worker support. More often than not, companies found that their efforts to channel blacks into parallel unions simply damned those unions in the eyes of the workers. Even the minister of manpower utilization, Mr Faerie Botha, began to caution employers against trying to force their employees into "sweetheart" unions, though he still urged them not to have any dealings with unregistered black unions.

Ten years ago it would have been easy for companies to destroy the independent black unions, simply by firing all workers who were members and hiring replacements from the country's huge pool of black unemployed. But the severe shortage of skilled white manpower is forcing employers to train blacks for more senior jobs and this small supply of skilled blacks has now acquired bargaining strength. This was conclusively proved during the two great watershed strikes at Ford and Volkswagen in the Eastern Cape last year.

The FCI has now publicly recognized the futility of trying to tell black workers which unions are acceptable and which are not. The choice must be left to them, even if they exercise it in favour of independent unregistered unions. It is of the utmost importance, the FCI says, for employers not to refuse to talk to emerging unions. It was also essential for companies to be democratic and neither foster nor hamper particular unions.

The chamber adds that it is aware of the risks attached to recognizing unions outside the industrial relations structure laid down by the government, but says that this is the only way to create a spirit of "trust and goodwill".

The chief implication of what the FCI is saying—and one which opens the way to a clash between Pretoria and the business sector—is that the promised changes to the union registration system succeed in

persuading all black unions to register—is that company managements should now regard the degree of shop-floor support, rather than official registration, as the main test of a union's acceptability.

In reversing its earlier stand on this issue, the chamber is bringing its policy more into line with the EEC code of fair labour practice for European companies in South Africa (some of whom have been among the companies accused of victimising independent unions).

Mr Bill Vose, the prime mover of the code—then labour attaché at the British embassy in Pretoria—was always at pains to stress that its most important aim was to ensure that workers should be allowed a free choice in the type of organization to speak for them.

Union reaction to the FCI's guidelines has been cautious. Mr Henry Chipewa, a prominent black union official, said that they were a "major step", but he wanted to know whether they would be "translated into meaningful and positive action". In the past, he said, guidelines had often not left companies drawing blood.

If employers do follow them, the guidelines could ultimately lead to a reexamination of the established collective bargaining system in which employers and white unions set wages and working conditions. On an industry-wide basis through the industrial councils covering different sectors.

Provided that they register, black unions can now obtain seats on the councils, but they argue that the too centralized and bureaucratic to handle shop-floor problems. They want a strong shop steward system built up instead.

The chamber professes its continuing faith in the industrial council system, but it has also emphasized the need to devise a collective bargaining system in conjunction with the emerging black unions, which will push for major modifications.

The real casualty of the FCI guidelines is likely to be the established union movement, including unions affiliated to the trade union council of South Africa (TUCA). Their belated attempts to enrol blacks and so maintain their representative status on the shop floor have met with cynicism and derision.

The failure of many of the parallel unions they have been trying to set up is undoubtedly an important factor in prompting the FCI to urge its members to talk to the independent unions directly instead, so bypassing the white intermediaries.

Already, seven out of every ten workers in the South African black trade union movement are in unions which will gain greater skills. Inevitably, realistic employers will increasingly seek accommodation with them rather than with the old white unions and their diminishing representativeness.

John Kane-Berman

## Bitterness in Belgium's centre

"Quality, productivity and social peace equal unemployment."

The placards outside British Leyland's Belgian assembly plant at Seneffe fail to capture the bitterness felt among the 2,200 workers who will be dismissed at the end of March when Leyland ends its manufacturing operation in Belgium.

For them the closure represents a betrayal. In the 17-year history of the plant, productivity has risen steadily and there has never been a strike. Most of those being dismissed will be hard pressed to find new jobs. The factory has the highest unemployment rate of any country in the EEC.

Around Seneffe, according to Mr Willems, the economic minister, about 30 per cent of the working population will now be without work.

For the Belgian Government the closure means that another problem region has been added to the depressed areas of Verviers, Liège and Charleroi in Wallonia, the French-speaking southern part of the country.

The village of Seneffe is about 35 kilometres south of Brussels. Surrounded by heavy, clayey pasture land, with an overgrown church at its centre and a new estate of flat-roofed "semites" to the south, it looks rather more prosperous than the usual Belgian village.

The reason for this prosperity is the Leyland factory—lies a kilometre or so away on the south side of the Brussels-Charleroi canal. It is a functional concrete and metal structure, typical of the factories built in the boom years of the 1950s and 1960s when Belgium was a mecca for foreign investors and appeared to be successfully transforming its industrial base away from iron, steel and coal situated just a few kilometres to the

Industry in Europe

Seneffe, Belgium

south in the valleys of the Meuse and the Sambre.

Seneffe was typical of the industrial development of the "centre" of Belgium, the triangular area stretching southwards from the affluent suburbs of Brussels to the northern border of the Liège-Charleroi industrial axis, this has not always been the case.

Seneffe is not the only example of a postwar industrial boom. At Tubize, about 20 kilometres to the north, the Fabela synthetic fibres plant is in the hands of the receiver. Five workers at the plant have been on hunger strike for more than a fortnight and last week some of their colleagues blocked the main Brussels to Paris railway line for a day to underline their demands that the plant should be rescued.

Fabela-Tubize was once part of the Akzo group. Since the Dutch-based multinational made synthetic fibre making in Belgium in the 1970s it has been struggling to survive in the face of continually deteriorating market conditions, an inadequate cash flow and insufficient funds for investment.

Seneffe and Fabela-Tubize

are the large-scale examples of a pattern that prevails throughout the central area of Belgium. On the outskirts of the old industrial centres, the white Brabant empty factories and warehouses bear witness to the withdrawal of foreign investment from the country and the decline of the traditional textile, metalworking and paper making industries.

With the recession continuing, Belgium has learnt the hard way that foreign investment is vulnerable.

New companies have been discouraged from coming to Belgium as labour costs have risen since the early 1970s to be the highest in the European Community and labour laws have made it difficult to shed any part of a workforce when economic conditions deteriorate.

The drying up of foreign investment has applied in the Flemish speaking north of the country as well as the French-speaking south. But in Wallonia the problem is more serious, because it has added to the difficulties arising from the gradual decay of the old zone of heavy industry between Charleroi and Liège.

At Seneffe, the unions and workforce hold British Leyland responsible for their predicament. They argue that the plant could have survived with higher investment and a new model to replace the Mini and Allegro.

But their bitter experience has been repeated on a smaller scale elsewhere in the centre of Belgium. It is only now that the area, which straddles the provinces of Wallonia Brabant and Hainaut and hence has no natural administrative centre, is generating a regional consciousness of its own.

The tragedy is that this growing awareness may be too late to prevent the "centre" from becoming an economic wasteland.

Peter Norman

## Business Diary profile: George Mathewson and the SDA

As a weapon to win industry and investment for Scotland, the Scottish Development Agency has lately looked somewhat blunted. The committee of Scottish MPs considering inward investment even suggested that the agency had failed to contribute a single job to Scotland—a charge more easily made than proved.

Certainly the recession and the effects of Government have adversely affected the agency's confidence in its two important and controversial functions—direct investment in industry and projecting Scotland overseas.

With morale down and uncertainty rising, enter a new man as chief executive. Dr George Mathewson takes over today at a critical point in the SDA's history.

He sees the job as the challenge it clearly is. He will head an organization with a remit much broader than that of the National Enterprise Board—encompassing promotion of industry in Scotland, factory building, large and small-scale risk investment and clearing up the wastelands left by old industry.

It is this range of activity, and the possibility of cross-disciplinary work that helped to attract Mathewson. "Of course, that makes for its own management problems."

Mathewson is 40, a Scot with a firm faith that Scotland can be rejuvenated into a formidable industrial force. His career so far has been impeccable and in many respects tailored to the job. He joins the agency Finance Corporation and Commercial Finance Corporation, Britain's largest source of venture capital and long-term finance for small and medium-sized companies.

Mathewson was a director and assistant general manager in ICFC looking after a third or so of the corporation's area offices, covering about 1,000 companies. He was involved in business development and the various facets of investment in private companies.

Before that he spent five years in the United States, where he managed research and development projects in



It's not what you've got, but what you do with it: George Mathewson, chairman from today of the Scottish Development Agency.

professional businessman, who is also a scientist able to judge the risks in high technology projects.

Robertson was the founder chief executive of the SDA. He announced he would not be seeking reappointment because he wished to return to the industry. He said at the time that if he left it another five years he would be too old. He is a non-executive director of Scottish and Newcastle but no firm plans for his future have been announced.

Colleagues of Mathewson described him as "addicted to work". One said: "Anyone appointed to such a high position at his age, in an organization devoted to risk ventures has to be good."

But will Mathewson handle the political shifts which now bedevil the agency's work? It is probably true that the SDA now takes on greater risk in its so-called venture capital projects than many banks and private investment institutions in Scotland. Since the losses in the Stonefield truck debacle the agency has confined itself to well-secured investments.

The Scottish Office obliged the SDA to call in the Receiver to Stonefield. This was necessary, the Scottish Office argued, for the simple reason that although the truck, designed for rough terrain, might be a superb concept it could not survive the roughest terrain of all—a market place without origins.

Mathewson is not without experience in dealing with politicians and civil servants. Those with whom he was concerned were American, "but you would be surprised how many of the rules are the same."

He very nearly joined the British Civil Service before going to the ICSC and with that body he got to know the Department of Industry well.

"That side of things is not completely new to me. I am not saying it is going to be difficult, but I am aware of how difficult it can be."

Certainly, the SDA could hardly have

found a closer blend of technical, investment and management expertise in one person to restore its confidence and to reestablish it in the role of providing bright ideas to men with ideas in empty pockets and negligible security.

Investment takes up barely 3 per cent of the agency's total budget and Mathewson believes the press concentration to much on the bad news is done which does not have enough publicity," he says.

He arrives at the agency just ahead of a White Paper expected in a couple of weeks which, it is hoped, will end the friction between the SDA and the Scottish Economic Planning Department. It is thought that a new joint body will coordinate the industrial promotion role of the two organizations with a senior civil servant from the planning department in control but housed in the SDA building with agency staff forming the new link.

Mathewson will be starting his new job with not only a new connexion but with other recently appointed civil servants—Dr Gavin McCrone as head of the planning department, and James Scott, who directs the department's operation in Glasgow. He hopes there will be some pay-off this year from the growing attention shown recently by overseas industrialists in the electronics and technological areas. Importing technology could allow Scotland to learn, and it could then add its own experience and ability and develop from there.

But was it simply a question of shedding old industry and investing in high technology? "Not anything like as straightforward as that," he says. A lot of traditional industries had plenty of steam left in them.

Stimmed down, more efficient and geared to the markets he expects to see some phoenixes rising from their ashes.

Ronald Faux



## GRA Property Trust to make final payment

By Our Financial Staff  
GRA Property Trust, the greyhound racing and property group, has said it is now in a position to pay the final 15p in the pound to creditors.

This should mark the end of the Scheme of Arrangement entered into in 1978 as an alternative to liquidation. But Mr Jack Aaronson, GRA chairman brought in to administer the scheme, says that the liability under guarantees given by the company in respect of certain Kay Bevan contingent creditors had not yet been determined and no amount has been admitted in respect of these external debts.

"The terms of the Scheme of Arrangement require the scheme to continue until satisfactory arrangements have been made with these creditors so that their claims can either be admitted and paid or withdrawn," he said.

This final payment of £445,662 is the last of total external admitted debts of around £2.97m.

The payment was made on pre-tax profits for the year to the end of last October down from just over £1m to £940,000 on a turnover up from £10.8m to £11.9m.

Mr Aaronson said that, despite a good first half, the inevitable impact of the deepening recession resulted in reduced profits. Major shareholder of GRA is the ICI Pension Fund which holds £563,000 of loan stock convertible into ordinary shares.

Minority shareholders have been concerned that on conversion the fund would be able to acquire a major stake in the group fairly cheaply.

There were moves to buy the stake but those were finally thwarted last August when the pension fund, through its pension fund securities, gave notice that it will take up the option to convert the loan notes into 12.6 million ordinary shares giving them a 26.3 per cent stake. The shares were picked up at 20p.

Meanwhile, GRA shares, traded in the stock market under the special rule 163 (2), were active last week. The price opened at 15p, dropped to 13p and ended the week at 14p.

**Grimsdown down in half year**  
Over the half year to October 31, Grimsdown Holdings' turnover rose from £2.2m to £2.3m but profit on trading shrank from £115,000 to £36,000. This is before charging interest of £111,000 against £33,000.

Mr Thomas Kenny, chairman, says that as yet there is little sign of any positive improvement. "We have taken the

usual steps to reduce the value of working capital. Subsidiary company management has been reinforced at points where weaknesses were beginning to show."

### Briefly

**Robertson Foods:** The directors of Robertson Foods have considered the offer for Robertson announced by Amara Group on January 28, 1981. Following discussions with their financial advisers, J.H. Samuel & Co, the directors have decided that the best interests of Robertson and its shareholders will be served by Robertson remaining independent. They are of the opinion that the terms proposed are completely inadequate and that the offer should be rejected.

**Brent Chemicals:** Shareholders approved proposed acquisition of major part of chemicals division of Safflower Chemical Company. Brent have warned the 1980 results, due next month, will show pre-tax profits "slightly below" the previous year.

**R. Paradise:** Proposed rights issue on basis of 11-for-5 at 45p per share to raise about £1.45m after expenses. Purpose of issue is to satisfy the £775,000 cost of acquiring new companies and to cut bank borrowings. For the 12 months to April 30 next, Paradise forecasts that consolidated pre-tax profits of the enlarged group will be not less than £315,000.

**Higher offer for Colmore:** Nesco Investments have increased their offer for Colmore Investments to 33p cash per share. This follows the purchase of a further 64,380 ordinary shares in Colmore (about 1.62 per cent) at 33p each, bringing Nesco's holding to 1.42 million shares (35.43 per cent) and, with bank borrowings, a total of about 50.03 per cent.

**Vectis Stone:** Mr Alfred Collins, chairman, says in his annual report that it would be unreasonable to expect profits in the current year to exceed last year's earnings of £15,000. However, every effort will be made to minimize the anticipated problems of 1981.

**Ransome Hoffmann Pollard:** Chairman told the annual meeting that the year has not had an easy start and there has been a significant fall in UK deliveries during the first quarter, reflecting the severe effects of the destocking cycle. "We hope that the turning point may soon be reached and that the order position will begin to improve."

**Burco Dean:** Mr Spencer Crookenden, chairman, says in his annual report that the recession shows no signs of easing. "Bank borrowings continue to be well within the facilities agreed by our bankers who have been most understanding and helpful in this difficult year for the company." Pre-tax profits for the year to last September fell from £1.17m to a loss of £1.1m.

## API still finds it tough to make profit

Associated Paper Industries, the Cheshire-based group which reported a net £3.9m loss last year after substantial closures and a 33 per cent cut in the workforce, is still finding it difficult to make profits.

Mr Charles Rawlinson, chairman, tells shareholders in his annual report out today that current trading conditions are not good, but steps taken to eliminate fundamental problems put API in a position where it can benefit greatly from the upturn in demand when it comes.

"We are more competitive and a lot leaner than we were, there is more to do, but we are confident of the outcome even if in the short-term things remain difficult," he said.

API's results for the year to last September show a trading profit on its continuing operations down from £2.4m to £2.1m. A near doubled interest charge and losses on closed operations of just over £1m brought the pre-tax profit down from £1.9m to £332,089.

However, full provision for all closure costs relating to The Vale Board Mills, Cooke & Nuttall and two overseas subsidiaries of £3.9m pushed the group into the red.

## Joint liquidators announced for Rivington Reed

Joint liquidators of Rivington Reed, whose chairman, Mr Graham Ferguson Lacey, has a 28.3 per cent stake, have been announced as Mr Peter Fleisher, of accountants Thornton Baker, and Mr Frank Taylor, of Arthur Young McClelland Moores.

Rivington is the holding company of a textile group with 15 subsidiaries, many, but not all, of which have been in receivership since May last year.

Mr Fleisher said the appointments are subject of confirmation by the High Court and that they cannot commence work until the receiver has completed the disposal of those companies which could be sold.

In the last year for which audited accounts are available, to March, 1979, group turnover was £23m and there was a £1m loss.

At that time borrowings were put at £4.14m with creditors owed £6.77m. Net assets stood at £10.95m.

## Lonrho results should be up sharply

Companies reporting this week include Lonrho, electronic components manufacturer Unitech, and the Prestige Group. Supermarkets group Hillards, also releases figures.

Economic news starts off today with details of house prices and mortgage starts from the building societies and ends on Friday with the number of housing starts and completions in December from the Department of the Environment, along with figures on house renovations in the final quarter of 1980.

But the star spot is taken up by the United Kingdom official reserves for January, which the Treasury announces on Tuesday. That day also sees the Bank of England's figures for capital issues and redemptions. Thursday brings provisional figures of vehicle production in January, from the Department of Industry.

Hillards announces its interim figures to the end of October today. Analysts are expecting some improvement in margins, on top of higher turnover from the series of store openings last year.

However, that improvement will show up more against the difficult second part of last year than the first period; so interim profits of between £1.3m and £1.7m are forecast now against £1.3m with full-year profits rising towards £3.2m against £2.2m pre-tax.

Food volume is thought to be good at Hillards, which has been able to improve its margins after losing ground last year. Non-food is a small proportion of total turnover but the five big stores opened between March, 1979, and August, 1980, carry a larger share of non-food items than the older, smaller stores and therefore should be less profitable than expected, with the difficult economic climate cut-

ring spending on the non-food side.

The group has also revamped its non-food operation recently and there is concern in the City that the timing of that operation was unfortunate. However, dividend to this year are expected to be higher than the previous year and the expected better second half.

With not much lined up to provide a boost to next year,

### This week

Analysts are taking a cautious long-term view of the shares.

Tuesday sees Prestige, the manufacturer of small household goods, releasing preliminary figures for 1980. Pre-tax profits are expected to be around £5m to £5.5m, against £3.8m the previous year. But the feeling is that the final dividend will be maintained, as was the interim. American Home Products owns 74 per cent of the equity.

Prestige's most important profit-earner is the home market, which was hit by destocking earlier in the year but had a better Christmas season than expected. The group is protected to some extent from the decline in consumer spending because of its wide range of small products, some of the largest of its kitchen products are the successful slow electric and pressure cookers. As a result it is less prone to the recession now than some of the bigger groups, but equally will benefit less dramatically from any upturn.

Exports to Europe have been hit by the strengthening pound, which has trimmed margins, but the overseas manufacturing interests in Australia and South Africa, which have buoyant markets and thought to be doing well, though the Euro-

pean side is catching the recession.

Looking ahead, analysts are hoping for an indication from the company of whether the improvement before Christmas has lasted, but think that a slow-down in destocking will give the first half of this year a fillip even if nothing else does.

Unitech also reports on Tuesday, with the first set of interim figures to include German electrical components distributor Enatechnik, acquired in March, 1980.

Including Enatechnik's contribution, analysts are looking for between £2.3m and £2.5m pre-tax for the first half, with the original company not showing much improvement on the previous interim figure of £2m. This is because the high



Mr Peter Curry, chairman of Unitech.

technology components distribution side has seen prices fall steeply and in the depressed economic climate has not been able to compensate with higher volume.

Lonrho's 1979-80 figures come out on Thursday. Forecast range from about £125m up to £136m against £76.5m with good results expected

from gold, platinum, sugar and hotel operations but poor performances from the United Kingdom cargo, engineering and manufacturing interests, including Dutton-Forsyth and Dunford & Elliot.

The figures will contain a full year of SUITS, Princess Properties International and the 29.5 per cent stake in House of Fraser, which is estimated to add around £9m to profits this year.

Exchange rates went against Lonrho last year, but commodity prices favoured it, and 1979's Christmas trade is said to have been good. At the time of the rights issue the group said it would maintain the previous final dividend payment on the increased capital.

**TODAY Interims:**—Dura Mill, Hillards, Regional Props, William Somerville & Son, and Vibroplant Bldgs.

**Finals:**—None announced.

**TOMORROW Interims:**—Cowan De Groot, Gold Fields of South Africa, Steinberg Group and Unitech.

**Finals:**—English & New York Trust, Prestige Group and UC Investments.

**WEDNESDAY Interims:**—Amal Tin Mines of Nigeria, City of London Brewery & Investment Trust (interim results), and Bena Bros.

**Finals:**—Sterling Trust.

**THURSDAY Interims:**—None announced.

**Finals:**—Aarons Bros, Blundell-Permelegre Bldgs and Lonrho.

**FRIDAY Interims:**—Armour Trust (amended), Second Alliance Trust, Sentrust, and Stoddard Bldgs.

**Finals:**—British American & General Trust, and Glasgow Stockholders Trust.

Catherine Gunn

## Oil shares expected to leap after slow start

North Sea oil has been under scrutiny for the eighth running by the team at P & Co, who say that share movement in 1981 will fall three distinct time phases.

During the early part of year oil shares will perform relatively poorly, but the summer will bring the seasonal interest in the North Sea drilling results. "From third quarter onwards we see a really strong trend in share prices as the spec count gathers for the December fixing against a background of improving economic activity in the western world," Mr Fr Watts, Mr Clive Callow and Simon Wharmby say.

Among the majors, a highlight BP, where Beaufort Sea drilling activity will emphasize the air.

### Brokers' views

Alaskan position, and International Thomson Organisation where the disposal of Tir Newspapers will focus attention on its oil and asset position. Tricentral, which is selling an unsecured discount estimated at 10p, with Woodside of Australia are recommended.

Among the smaller independents, they recommend A Energy because of its sumo drilling programme offshore the Irish Republic. Associated Newspapers with its share balance-sheet and Candecta's "outstanding onshore assets and excellent management and suggest switch from Marine and Gass & Oil Acres as cash flow from Buchan field will start.

Care Seabag has cast its vote over the leading Australian and the analysts, Barry Aling and Mr Paul Me point out that share prices many of the smaller exploration companies have become overheated there are some that remain attractive.

At home, Moore Gower looked at a much smaller sector, advertising agencies, and believes that Geers Gro one of the two London-quoted agencies, is at an interesting stage.

Geers Gross, which has market capitalization of £4 compared with Saatchi & Saatchi's £11.4m, has boosted earnings a share from 2.9p to 7.1p in the last five years. It has its investment prospects lies in its US operation which are well established while Saatchi is trying to move into that market.

Geers Gross is now ready to compete for accounts with budgets of up to £25m (£10.5m). The gaining of only one such account could dramatically increase profitability without the necessity of increased overheads," Mr K. L. G. Shepper says.

He also cites the American experience that reductions in advertising budgets during a economic crisis are a recipe for irrecoverable loss of market share.

Rosemary Unsworth

## Why life in the toy world is not all fun and games

The Christmas of 1979 and 1980 were probably the unhappiest and the most troubled ever experienced by the UK toy industry. However, this date is October 15 in the retailer's diary. Volume sales over the period were down by seven per cent on total market sales of £700m. This included both United Kingdom exports and imports. Retailers delayed their buying until November and the downturn in consumer spending left both stores and manufacturers with excess

the final dividend will be passed with losses estimated at £7m. Recovery will not show through until the next financial year, but analysts think that its present low rating should be the firm's "once the full effects of reorganisation are felt. The workforce was cut by a fifth from 7,500.

Mettoy, makers of "Coragi" toys, also a big exporter, fell into similar troubles. In the six months to September the group lost £2.1m on profits of £703,000, with sales falling off to £16.4m. The shares are just above the year's low at 18p and yield 14.6 per cent. After rationalization costs last year of £128,000, a further £400,000 is expected. The interim dividend was passed.

Although Berwick Timpo reported losses in the half year of £288,000 it is confidently looking to full-year profits of between £500,000 and £900,000. It maintained the interim gross dividend at one-half-way stage, and is expected to recommend an unchanged gross total of 8.5p for the year. But the shares at 54p, yielding 15.9 per cent on a p/e ratio of 2.14 on stated earnings, are perhaps not fully reflecting the group's position.

Losses for the half year are not unusual in an industry where traditionally 90 per cent of profits are made in the second half of the year. This year the losses were due mainly to the cost of closing two loss-making subsidiaries. In 1979 the group saw profits of £1.5m on sales of £16.8m. Sales this year are expected to drop to £13m. Cowan de Groot is also fairly well insulated from the worst troubles since toy sales account for only 24 per cent of total turnover. The profit contribution is slightly higher at 30 per cent, and the company has protected its toy market by importing 60 per cent of sales direct to the larger stores from the Far East.

Profits in the year to September are expected to be £4.4m on sales up to £44.09m and "satisfactory" profits are expected in the interim results due tomorrow.

With the group's electrical and hardware division expanding, the shares perhaps understate its potential. At 54p, they yield 9.2 per cent on a stated p/e of 3.3.

The influx of imports from the US and Japan has been steadily rising since 1975 but it has yet to have its full impact on the toy market. It is for this reason that the extent of the recovery in the sector cannot be judged for another four or five years.

Margareta Pagano



Few customers share the industry's worries.

## Business appointments Morgan Crucible names two new directors

Mr D. A. M. Dunbar and Dr E. R. Farmer have become directors of Morgan Crucible.

Mr John Floyd is leaving Panmure Gordon & Company on Friday to become a non-executive director of Lloyd Oil Participations. He remains an associate of Panmure Gordon.

Mr Donald Patience has become director and manager of Finance Corporation for Industry, a member of the Finance for Industry group. R. M. H. Heseltine is now director for corporate development of Croda International.

Mr J. Burnett-Stuart, who has been deputy chairman of Robert Fleming Holdings since 1975, is to succeed Mr W. R. Martin on his retirement as chairman and as a director of Robert Fleming & Co. Mr D. G. Thomas will become deputy chairman of Robert Fleming Holdings.

Mr Geoffrey J. Redmond, formerly managing director of Seddon Atkinson Vehicles, has been made financial director and Dr Michael Bamer has joined the board as a non-executive director. Dr Bamer is an assistant director of Barclays Merchant Bank, the company's financial adviser.

Mr Douglas McKean has been reappointed by the Treasury to his post on the board of the Agricultural Mortgage Corporation.

Mr Paul S. J. Zatz has become company secretary of Clyde Petroleum.

Mr John A. Talbot has been made a partner of Spicer and Pegler. Mr Reginald J. Glisson and Mr Michael G. Crawford have retired as partners. Mr David M. Thomson has been named a local director of Singer and Friedlander.

## Lord Carrington on Britain's priorities in Europe

## Wilhelm Haferkamp on external challenges to the Community

## Francois Duchêne on nationalism and agricultural policy

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## MANAGEMENT TRAINING COURSES











## PERSONAL CHOICE

## Broadcasting Guide

Edited by Peter Dear

## TELEVISION

## BBC 1

9.00 am For Schools: Colleges: A job for the disabled; 9.30 Microscopes and Molecules; 9.52 Read On!; 10.15 Music; 10.38 Maths; 11.00 Merry-go-round; 11.25 You and Me (see Schools); 11.40 Industrial Relations. Closes at 12.05 pm.

12.45 News.

1.00 Pebble Mill at One. Donny MacLeod, with the help of an American, Clifton Kharu, explores parts of the ancient Japanese capital of Kyoto that the tourists rarely see. 1.45 Mister Me.

2.01 For Schools: Colleges: Words and Pictures; 2.18 Europe from the air; 2.40 The first week of work.

3.00 When the Tough Breaks. John Thaw with advice for parents who believe their children are misbehaving. 3.15 Songs of Praise introduced by Noreen Bray from the Mount Pleasant United Reform Church, Pontypool; 3.35 Play School (shown earlier on BBC 2); 4.00 Undercover Eek! Today our hero is in the unlikely disguise of a belly-dancer (r); 4.25 Jackanory. 4.55 Jarvis reads the first part of the Indian in the Cupboard by Lynne Reid Banks;

## BBC 2

10.00 am Focus. The fourth in a series of ten programmes on Higher Education (r). 10.25 Working with Young People. A series of programmes to help the school leaver understand one another (r). Interval at 10.50.

11.00 Play School. Today's story is The Little Prince. The presenters are Chloe Ashcroft and Ben Thomas; 11.25 Wipe Away. An animated series of seven programmes, in which Barry Took helps people who have difficulty in filling in job application forms. Closes at 11.40.

11.50 Let's Go. Brian Rix introduces the programme that aims to help the mentally disabled live a more full life (r); 2.30 Multi-Racial Britain. The fourth in a series of ten films on race relations; 3.00 Embroidery. This afternoon's subject is Surface

## THAMES

9.30 am For Schools: Lines and Rows—the difference explained to young children; 9.47 Maths; 10.05 True and Imaginary; 10.23 Simple Mathematics; 10.40 French conversation; 11.05 Derek Griffiths with a programme on ways for hearing-impaired children; 11.22 Picture Box; 11.39 Life with a Victorian doctor and his family.

12.00 Buntan News. Another adventure for the puppet urban spaceman. 12.10 Rainbow. Educational puppets. 12.30 Your Chance. Women's Week in the making of today's programme on continuing education and training for adults.

1.00 News read by Peter Sissons.

1.20 Thames News with Robin Houston.

1.30 Crown Court. A radio researcher is accused of malicious libel by his former employer (r).

1.40 The Irishman. Life with a Roman holiday in the Cotswolds.

2.30 Coronation Street. Bert throws the rest of the Tilsley can

## ITV

4.35 Playhouse: The Rose of Ice by John Challin. The King's only daughter is abducted by the Ice Troll. How will he get her back? 5.00 John Craven's Newsround. News for young people presented by the young person's Kenneth Kendall; 5.10 Blue Peter; a preview of the new St. Valentine's Day stamp and an unusual way of sending your message of devotion to your loved one. There is also a preview for an edible Easter Egg.

5.40 News read by Kenneth Kendall; 5.55 Nationwide. Included this evening is Hugh Scully's interview with the author of the new St. Valentine's Day stamp and an unusual way of sending your message of devotion to your loved one. There is also a preview for an edible Easter Egg.

6.55 Triangle. Drama series about the crew of a ferry that sails the North Sea; 7.20 Star Trek: Day of the Dove; 8.00 Kings and Queens: the crew of the starship Enterprise as they fight with the Klingons (r).

8.10 Panorama: The Politics of Hunger. Peter Taylor reports from Mali, one of the poorest countries in the world. (See Personal Choice).

9.00 News read by John Edwards.

9.35 Film: The Baby-Maker (1970) starring Barbara Hershey. A childless couple who have a flower-power girl if she would have a baby sired by the husband.

## Regions

When she agrees it leads to all sorts of complications between the couple, the girl and the girl's father. 11.10 Film 81 introduced by Barry Norman. Three films are reviewed tonight—The Formula, for which Marion Brand was reputedly paid a million dollars a scene; the remake of the Jazz Singer starring Neil Diamond as the Mammy boy and Laurence Olivier as his father; and My Boyfriend, the story of a high school bully who eventually gets his deserts.

11.45 News headlines.

11.50 The Formula. Part four of the series on different methods of postal communication presented by Cwyn Richards and Jill Cochrane.

12.10 am Weather.

## Regions

9.00 The Hitch-Hikers Guide to the Galaxy. Another episode of the television version of the cult science-fiction radio series starring David Dixon and Simon Jones.

9.30 The Living with Dying. A look at the essential work of the Countess Mountbatten House European Centre. The narrator is Penelope Lee (see Personal Choice).

10.20 Evans on Newspapers. In the third part of his series the editor of the Sunday Times sings the praises of still pictures with examples of the most dramatic photographs ever published.

He also shows the work of 19th C. on-the-spot artists.

10.45 Newsnight. The latest world news plus in-depth analysis of the events that made today's headlines.

11.30 Tele-Journal. Tonight's news as seen in a French speaking European country introduced by Marianne Lawrence. The programme ends at 12.00.

## Regions

into turmoil over his proposed election to the I.V.

8.00 Shelley. The out-of-work graduate turns his hand to re-writing his house and finds some of the most dramatic photographs ever published.

8.30 World in Action. An in-depth analysis of one of the top news items of the moment.

9.00 The Sweeney with John Thaw. The Sweeney's latest adventures are apparent to one of London's biggest mobsters causes some consternation to the Flying Squad.

10.00 News.

10.30 The Troubles. The final film in the series that looks at the events that have led to the present state of affairs in Northern Ireland. The programme covers the period from 1972 to the present.

11.40 The Monte Carlo Show. The Oak Ridge Boys are among the guests of Patrick Wayne in tonight hour of entertainment.

12.00 The R.A.F. Sir Neil Cameron, who reads from works from which he has drawn inspiration.

## Radio 4

6.00 am News Briefing.

6.10 Farming Week.

6.30 Today.

7.00, 8.00 News.

7.30, 8.30 Headlines.

8.35 The Week on 4.

8.45 BBC Sound Archives.

9.00 News.

9.05 Start the Week.

10.00 News.

10.02 Music Box.

10.05 Bruch, Holst; 10.15 Story; Fergus, by Joyce Kilmer.

11.00 News.

11.05 A Man of Enterprise and Genius.

11.50 Poetry, Please!

12.00 News.

12.02 You and Yours.

12.05 Quotations; 12.10 Weather.

1.00 The World at One.

1.40 The Archers.

2.02 Woman's Hour.

3.00 News.

3.02 Play: Samarkand, by Timothy Mottram.

4.35 Just the Job.

4.45 No Fond Return of Love (11).

5.00 P.M.

5.02 Weather.

5.05 Frank.

6.30 Frank Muir goes into Hypocritism.

7.00 News.

7.02 The Archers.

7.20 The News Quiz.

7.30 Play: The Lift, by Allan Bennett (see Personal Choice).

8.00 Letters from Linda (2).

9.30 Kaleidoscope.

10.00 The World Tonight.

10.02 News.

11.00 The Worm Forgives the Plough (6).

11.15 Financial World Tonight.

12.00 News.

12.15 am-12.30 Shipping forecast.

## Radio 3

6.55 am Weather.

7.00 News.

7.05 Records: Boyce, Bridge, Bruch, Holst; 7.15 News.

8.00 News.

8.05 Records: Mozart, Tchaikovsky (Vin Conc-Helvetz), Wires; 8.15 News.

9.05 Week's Composer: Bach; 9.10 Ensemble (Koenig), pt 1: Milhaud, Schoenberg (9); 9.15 News.

10.00 News.

10.05 Ensemble, pt 2: Saxton (Traumstadt—1st perf), Weill; 10.15 Salzburg Mozart/Barshat, pt 1: Mozart; 10.20 News.

11.00 News.

11.05 Mozart (incl. Sym from K250).

1.00 News.

1.05 Quartet (Chillingham—live from St John's); Beethoven (op 18 no 6, op 135); 1.15 News.

2.05 Matinee Musicale; 2.15 News.

3.00 News.

3.05 Records: Bartok, Liszt, Noyk; 3.15 News.

4.00 News.

4.05 Mainly for Pleasure; 4.10 News.

5.00 Story: Mirrors, by Scouler Anderson.

5.30 News.

5.35 BBCSO, Roshdestvensky, pt 1: Tchaikovsky (Suite 3); 5.45 News.

6.30 BBCSO, pt 2: Elgar (Sym 2); 6.45 News.

7.00 Dream of a Ridiculous Man; 7.10 News.

7.15 Record: Grieg.

11.00 News.

11.05-11.15 Record: Schubert.

## Radio 1

5.40 am As Radio 2.

7.00 Mike Read.

8.00 Simon Bates.

11.00 Andy Peebles.

12.30 pm Newsbeat.

12.45 Steve Wright.

2.32 Dave Lee Travis.

3.00 News.

3.05 Richard Skinner.

10.02 John Peel.

10.05 News.

10.10 News.

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